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THE EFFECT OF READING AND DISCUSSING LITERATURE
WITH STRONG WOMEN CHARACTERS ON
SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS' SEX STEREOTYPE
AND OCCUPATIONAL ATTITUDES

by

Leslie Caspi

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Education

University of San Diego

1993

Dissertation Committee

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

THE EFFECT OF STRONG WOMEN CHARACTERS IN LITERATURE AND
THE ROLE OF LITERATURE DISCUSSION GROUPS

ON

THE PARTICIPATION OF SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS IN LITERATURE
DISCUSSION GROUPS AND ON THEIR SEX STEREOTYPE AND
OCCUPATIONAL ATTITUDES

There is considerable evidence that children develop stereotyped attitudes early in life and that these attitudes affect their futures. Many researchers agree that children's attitudes can be influenced by what they read and some studies have shown that attitudes can be changed by exposure to selected literature.

This study focused on a group of sixth grade children reading selected short stories and novels with female main characters. Literature discussion groups and written journals were used to facilitate response. The class was racially and socioeconomically mixed as a result of busing through the Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment and Magnet Programs. The class of thirty students had been divided into three homogeneous groups by the classroom teacher with the focus group comprised of six boys and four girls. Only one group's responses were analyzed, though all students participated in the study and were unaware of which group was chosen. The literature response groups and reader response journals were components of the study. The children

were not informed about the theme of the study. The selected literature was studied as a normal part of the curriculum.

This research incorporated both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to try to ascertain any effect the intervention might have on the children. The Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents, a questionnaire in Likert-scale format was used as a pre and post measure. The entire class participated in the tests and all of the students' data was used in the analysis. An additional questionnaire, The Brooks Occupational Survey, Revised was used only as a post measure for informational purposes. Flood and Lapp's Coding System for Analyzing Literary Discussion, was used to analyze transcripts of the discussion groups and the written journals.

The results of this study indicate that the children did speak about the topic, as they limited the majority of their responses to the text. There was significant progress in the discussion groups and the students became more engaged in the literature. The teacher decreased the amount of her direction and participation in the group as the students took the initiative regarding the direction of the discussion and their participation increased. The post tests indicated a more flexible and open attitude toward women.

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I would also like to recognize the contribution of my parents. I am grateful for my father's encouragement and financial assistance and my mother's unwavering support.

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I would like to dedicate this dissertation with love and appreciation to my husband, Shlomo and my children, Sarit, Tamar and Benjamin.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	ii
List of Tables.....	iv
List of Figures.....	v
Chapter 1: Statement of Issue.....	1
Purpose of Study.....	5
Research Questions.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	6
Chapter 2: Review of Literature.....	7
Attitudes and Stereotypes Regarding Women.....	7
Reader Response.....	18
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	24
Chapter 4: Analysis of the Data.....	37
Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions.....	91
Summary of Study and Findings.....	91
Conclusions.....	102
References.....	105
Appendices	
A. Letter of Permission.....	112
B. Attitude Scale.....	114
C. Brooks Survey.....	116
D. Introduction Letter to Parents.....	121
E. Letters to Parents.....	123
F. Culminating Activities.....	125

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Communication Procedures.....	39
2 Thinking Process.....	51
3 Sources of Comments.....	61
4 Coding System Totals.....	78
5 Attitude Scale.....	85
6 Occupational Instrument.....	87

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Communication Procedures.....	40
1A Communication Procedures: All Students.....	41
2 Communication Procedures: Maintain.....	43
3 Communication Procedures: Expand.....	45
4 Communication Procedures: Answer.....	47
5 Thinking Process.....	52
5A Thinking Process: All Students.....	53
6 Thinking Process: Elaboration.....	54
7 Thinking Process: Evaluation.....	56
8 Thinking Process: Explanation.....	57
9 Sources of Comments.....	62
9A Sources of Comments: All Students.....	63
10 Sources of Comments: Prior Knowledge of Self.....	64
11 Sources of Comments: Text Memory.....	66
12 Sources of Comments: Text Topic.....	68
13 Sources of Comments: Combined.....	69
14 Turns of Speaking: Males and Females.....	71
15 Lines of Speaking: Males and Females.....	71
16 Turns of Speaking: Students and Teacher.....	73
17 Lines of Speaking: Students and Teacher.....	73

CHAPTER 1

Statement of the Issue

There is considerable evidence that children develop stereotyped attitudes early in life and that these attitudes affect their futures. "The narrow stereotypes impose a severe limitation and an unnecessary constraint on the goals and aspirations of girls as well as boys at a most critical and impressionable period of their lives " (Oliver, 1974, p. 254). The women's movement of the 1970's brought about a closer look at sexism and its implications in our society. One of the major themes of the women's movement was to reject the traditionally accepted occupational and sex roles for women by beginning to demand equal access for all (Flerx, Fidler and Rogers, 1976). Before that time little was done to determine what lessons regarding sex roles the children were learning in either conscious or unconscious ways. Educational researchers began to analyze classroom texts and recreational books to see if they had been written from a sexist viewpoint (Nilsen, 1971; Weitzman, 1972;). However, published evidence of negative consequences as a result of stereotyped viewpoints had yet come to the surface.

Many researchers agree that children's attitudes can be influenced by what they read (Culp, 1975; Guttentag, 1976; Hitchcock, 1987; Kinman, 1985; Schau, 1985; Scott, 1979;

Shirley, 1969; Weitzman, 1972; Zimet, 1983). Many studies have shown that the sexism and stereotypes in children's books influence the self concepts and eventual career choice of girls (Ashby, 1978). Culp (1975) concluded that the majority of students in her Florida study had been influenced in their attitudes, values and behavior by the literature read in their English classes. She found that adolescents could be significantly affected by the literature that they read in the areas of sensitivity to others and the awareness of social issues even if they could not always articulate the reasons why. It seemed that there was a direct impact of their actions in both social action and leisure areas. Students who became most involved in the literary work or a single character in the literature were more influenced than those who did not connect as strongly. In addition, the classroom discussions of those shared works were shown to have a strong impact as well.

There have been quite a few studies over the years that have shown that attitudes can be changed by exposure to selected literature. For a study about the effect of a literature-based program on white children toward blacks, Kimoto (1974) found that the literature can produce positive attitudinal changes that are still retained after the cessation of the program. In addition to the studies with black and white children, there have been successes with positive outlooks regarding adolescent attitudes towards the

elderly and other minorities (Kimoto, 1974; Levine, 1977; Martin, 1980; Stone, 1985; Williams, 1979). There are also studies that have shown that if children are exposed to books showing girls in non-stereotyped roles it can influence their attitudes in a positive manner.

"If girls have been told by books all their lives that the role of the mother is the highest to which they can aspire, they are not likely to consider the role of doctor or carpenter as a real option. By widening the range of options available to girls and women in children's books, one may hope to widen the range of options that girls will consider appropriate for themselves" (Ashby, 1978, p.949).

The Caldecott award books have a greater influence on children because of their award status as they are more visible in libraries and book stores. In addition, teachers and librarians use these awards as a guide for using and ordering books. As they are more frequently used they have a greater influence even if they are not necessarily representative of all that is published (Dougherty and Engel, 1987). In the early 1970's, both Weitzman and Nilsen examined the Caldecott award winners for the previous twenty years. They found blatant stereotyping of women's roles and that they presented "a narrow view of reality" (Weitzman, 1972, p.1147). Not one woman in Weitzman's study had a job or a profession, but were shown only as wives and mothers. In both studies, the behavior by the female characters showed neither the interest nor the ability to be involved in activities outside the home environment. The studies found that the females were unable to react in ways which

were unemotional, independent from males, or to be effective in their actions (Nilsen, 1971; Pyle, 1976; Weitzman, 1972). A followup study of Caldecott award winners was conducted in 1987 by Dougherty and Engel. They found that progress has been made in a more balanced direction yet we have not yet arrived at total equity in the presentation of roles.

Since the studies of Weitzman and Nilsen, other studies have been conducted examining the impact of stereotyped picture books on preschoolers and the occupational choices of college students (Creany, 1990; Edwards, 1989; Jacquart, 1988; Jederman, 1974), but the preadolescent has been virtually ignored.

During the past year a number of reports have been issued on the status of women. The latest United Nations study of thirty-three countries stated that no country treats its women as well as its men. The American Association of University Women reported in February, 1993, that girls face discrimination and are at a disadvantage in the classroom and the job market, merely because they are girls. The study said that both sexes start school on equal footing but that girls fall behind by the end of high school. The study mentioned the bias of the textbooks and that girls are less likely to see themselves depicted in these textbooks--either they are virtually ignored or stereotyped. The Ms. Foundation's Take Our Daughters to

Work Day this past April, 1993, was widely criticized for various reasons. But the effort needs to be made to educate today's girls that they can achieve whatever they aspire. It's true that the boys should not be ignored, they too need to be sensitized regarding equity issues for all. But the needs of the boys are different than those of the girls, as Anna Quindlen said in her New York Times article, "no one has to assure her sons that a boy can grow up to be President".

The time of preadolescence is a time of decision-making, a time of questioning, a time of learning--it is a difficult time for children. Tomorrow's leaders are today's preteens and they must be provided with a window to the real world so that they will have the understanding and capability to develop to their utmost potential.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if the reading of literature with non-stereotyped women characters would have an influence on the sex stereotypes and occupational attitudes of sixth grade children and on their participation in literature discussion groups.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. Will reading books with strong women characters show a difference in the pre and post scores on the Attitudes Towards Women Scale for Adolescents ?
2. Will the reading of books with strong women characters have an effect on the quantity and quality of the responses toward gender issues students generate in literature discussion groups or in the reader response journals ?

DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Sex Roles - Sex roles are the characteristics that are assigned to individuals according to their sex. Different cultures may have different characteristics.

Sex Role Stereotypes - Sex role stereotypes are the very strict and narrow beliefs and the applications of these beliefs to the roles of the males and females in that culture. "Sex role stereotypes do not describe how women and men actually differ, but how society thinks they do" (Franks and Rothblum, 1983).

Sex Role Attitudes - Sex role attitudes are the expected and judged standards of what sex roles should be and how they can or cannot be changed.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

The review of the literature for this study encompasses two major areas, including that of attitudes and stereotypes toward women and the reader response theory. Women, stereotypes and attitudes are at times interrelated and will be discussed in that manner. Reader response theory and discussion of literature will be dealt with separately.

Attitudes and Stereotypes Toward Women

A stereotype is a set of beliefs about the nature of a particular group of individuals; thus, sex-role stereotypes are beliefs about the nature of women and men...Sex-role stereotypes do not describe how women and men actually differ, but how society thinks they do (Franks and Rothblum, 1983, p.4).

There has always been a differentiation between the work roles in daily life of women and men. Girls have been segregated, tracked and funneled into different classes, activities and groups than boys (Bem, 1981; Franks, 1983; Pyle, 1976; Schau and Tittle, 1985). From the time they are born, even the terminology is different. Girls are referred to as soft and little and boys as strong and sturdy. Children are presented with gender differentiated toys; girls with dolls and boys with cars and tools; and certain gender specific behaviors are encouraged.

Schools also send not too-subtle signals that girls are not expected to excel in science. One researcher found that schools schedule "female" stereotyped courses such

as honors English, sociology, or languages opposite such "masculine" courses as physics (Peltz, 1990, p. 48).

The earlier generational focus for female aspirations of "kinder, kuche, kirche" (children, kitchen and church) are now being replaced by the three h's, healing, helping and home management (Fox and Hesse-Biber, 1984; Hillman, 1974). This tendency to link occupational and domestic responsibility together has had a negative influence on women today. It has resulted in occupational conflicts for women and greater domestic responsibility in addition to work. It has created a clash between a woman's sex role demanding someone who is nurturing and supportive and the desire or need for the modern woman to be more aggressive and competitive at work (Fox and Hesse-Biber, 1984).

Children learn these stereotypes not only by example, but throughout their years of schooling. Many of the books they read only serve to perpetuate occupational stereotypes and stereotypes in general (Fox and Hesse-Biber, 1984; Williams, Bennett and Best, 1975; Yawkey and Yawkey, 1976). By utilizing books showing the male as the doer, leader and the active participant and the female as a bystander, the myth of inequality continues (White, 1986). Eva Shinar conducted a study in 1975 regarding stereotypes of occupations as perceived by college students who were asked to classify occupations according to those that could be described as feminine, masculine or neutral. Her

conclusions align very closely with those of the studies examining children's books. Many occupations which were of a passive, dependent and nurturing nature were shown to be meant for females; and those occupations which required high levels of competence, assertive personalities and more rational beings were seen to be for males only (Bem, 1975). Other studies have shown that college students have stereotyped views about occupational roles which were formed during their childhood and adolescence do affect their occupational choices (Yanico, 1978). Yanico (1978) found that exposing people to non-sex-biased information about careers tended to make the participants less biased and that the opposite was also true; that exposing them to sex-biased information made them more biased.

Sex-role stereotyping is the result of the dynamic sociological situation of the child, who is surrounded by mediating forces of culture like schools, peers, and mass media. Stereotyping is self-perpetuating; it is not a developmental given nor is it the product of family influences or the socioeconomic status of the child. Because sex-role stereotyping is culturally induced, we can be optimistic about the possibility of changing and influencing it (Guttentag, 1976, p. 304-5).

It is important for all adolescents to be exposed to and to identify with healthy, realistic, feminine role models (Beaven, 1971). Fox and Hesse-Biber (1984) feel that in order to begin correcting the inequities that exist, instructional materials must eliminate the stereotyped portrayal of the sexes, patronizing language and any subconscious negative messages which currently exist (Fox

and Hesse-Biber, 1984, p. 207). This would bring about alignment with Title IX of the 1972 Higher Education Act mandating sex equity in education.

Textbooks are part of the "hidden curriculum" that carry messages about sex roles and careers. In the past women were usually invisible in science texts with the token exception of Marie Curie with her husband. This only serves to label and "relegate women to stereotypical roles (that) severely deter them from becoming functionally competent and autonomous human beings" (Bazler, 1990, p. 25). Spelling book illustrations showed girls representing the roles of the silent letters of the alphabet. This sort of illustration only serves to perpetuate a woman being silent and invisible and undermines a women's sense of self. Role models in books can make a difference in one's self image and future goals (Carlson, 1989).

As 51% of the population is comprised of women they should be equally represented in the titles of books, in leading roles, in illustrations, and realistically portrayed-- however, that has not been the case (Davis, 1984; Pyle, 1976). There has been some recent progress and changes made in some textbooks series on the market; but still equity has not yet been reached. Many school districts across the country are as yet unable to purchase these new series because of poor economic times - so the dated, more stereotypical series are still in use.

Nowhere is sex-role stereotyping more dangerous than in elementary-school readers. Books that are read in the home can at least, be screened by parents who are aware. Books that are assigned in the schools are read by all children, as mandated by the system. It is therefore particularly important that creators of elementary-school reading books be conscious of all varieties of sex-role stereotyping, overt and covert. They are not. Blatant examples of sexist attitudes are apparent in any of these books... (Oliver, 1974, p. 254-5).

Lenore Weitzman (1972) conducted one of the first studies of the portrayal of women in children's books in the early 1970's. She analyzed the role of the female in the award winning Caldecott books from 1938 to 1970. Books which appear on the list of winners and even the runnerups are ordered by most libraries and book stores in the country and are promoted by teachers and parents. "These are books that reflect our adult values and at the same time influence the formation of early childhood values...Children decide very early in life what roles are appropriate to male and female" (Nilsen, 1971, p.919). Weitzman found that females were "simply invisible" in these children's books, that they were underrepresented in all catagories of title, central roles, and pictures (Weitzman, 1972, p.1128). She found that "the role of most of the girls is defined primarily in relation to that of the boys and the men in their lives" and that none of the women shown had a profession, but were only shown in roles of wives or mothers (Weitzman, 1972, p.1136).

Training for a dependent passive role may inhibit a girl's chances for intellectual success. It is likely

that the excessive dependency encouraged in girls contributes to the decline in their achievement which becomes apparent as they grow older (Weitzman, 1972, p.1134).

Thus, rigid sex-role definitions not only foster unhappiness in children but they also hamper that child's fullest intellectual and social development (Weitzman, 1972, p.1139).

Weitzman's study became the standard bearer to all who followed. Many other studies have been done as followups or comparisons to that of Weitzman; a number of which will be discussed later.

At about the same time that Lenore Weitzman was conducting her study of the Caldecott list, Alleen Nilsen was independently doing a similar study. After an impromptu browsing of books on a display cart for teachers of children's literature, she found what she termed to be "a cult of the apron"; that 90% of all the books had the women pictured wearing an apron; she decided to more formally study the Caldecott books from 1950-1970. Nilsen found in her content analysis of the Caldecott books that there was a steady decrease over the years of books written for or about girls (Nilsen, 1971, p. 923). Nilsen and others (Applebee, 1979; Bernstein, 1974; Endicott, 1992; Frasher and Frasher, 1978; Oliver, 1974; Scott and Feldman-Summers, 1979) felt that the limited, stereotyped and largely negative roles exhibited by female story characters contribute to girls' feelings of inferiority and limit their roles as adults.

There are studies that discuss the fact that boys will not read books with females in the leading roles. But Nilsen's study and others (Bleakley, 1988; Carlson, 1989; Smith, 1987) argue that it is because girls are shown participating in traditional, rather than more positive and active roles. Boys will not read books about any characters that are boring, regardless of the gender of the character. When books showing women in positive and active roles, the boys liked those stories as well.

It seems that neither boys nor girls like to read about stereotyped females (passive, dependent, nonadventurous) or their exploits. The content of the story, then, is as important as the gender of the main character (Creany, 1990, p. 83).

Wilma Pyle and Joanne Bernstein both researching in the mid-1970's, felt it was imperative that the image of the female be improved in literature for the sake of the positive development of males. Men might be able to see all human beings as equals and have a better ability to understand not only themselves but others as well, if they are afforded the chance to read books with girls who are adventurers and "people of ideas" (Bernstein, 1974, p. 546).

There is an obvious and important need to improve the images of the female in literature for all children because boys, through their reading, assimilate attitudes and thoughts which have negative connotations regarding the female role. Girls and boys need to learn through their reading that girls can be interesting people, that the character of girls in books can and should develop beyond the stereotypes so commonly found, and that girls can and should be free to make choices about themselves and their

aspirations (Pyle, 1976, p.118).

McGraw-Hill Book Company in 1975 developed recommended guidelines for the books that they published. Their aim was to begin to eliminate sexist language and stereotyping in their publications and to help create an awareness among their staff. If all textbook companies would follow the lead of McGraw Hill, progress would have to be made. (Moore, 1974).

Social learning theory predicts that children learn what constitutes sex-appropriate behavior from the sex-role expectations and role models they observe around them. The books they read, both in and out of school, provide a major source of role models. If these models show women in limited, stereotyped roles, girls may tend to limit their own aspirations...By changing the content of the books children are exposed to, one may hope to change their attitudes toward themselves and others (Ashby, p. 945).

Melissa Kaufman (1982) in her dissertation, noted that "on the whole, stereotypes appear to become more, not less entrenched as books become more modern". Her study done in the 1982 was an historical review of male and female sex roles in adolescent literature and only served to confirm the findings of Nilsen. Kaufman found that as the years progressed, the image of parents went from "perfect" to much more negative portrayals; but that the sex roles did not significantly change. Her study showed that despite some positive portrayals of girls in boys books there were mostly negative attitudes towards the girls. Only the boys' development and maturation were given attention with those of the girls' being always connected to involvement with a

man, marriage or childbirth.

Engel's (1981) study of the Caldecott books found that in books of earlier times, women were not portrayed in historically accurate ways; however, the men's roles were shown to be closer to reality. The women's roles were limited and stereotyped. Engel felt that a number of factors were involved in the continuance of the portrayal of stereotyped roles in children's literature. The predominance of male characters in books and the predominance of labeling everything in the masculine, even if the meaning was meant for both male and female have only served to contribute to a conditioning process of stereotyping in our society. If young children constantly view stereotyped roles in their picture books, and if these views are consistently reinforced in literature as they grow up, then their mind set regarding sex roles and career goals will be greatly influenced. The result of Engel's investigation found that even though the Caldecott winners were of highly artistic and literary quality, that they were still behind in portraying an accurate picture of reality or sex role equity.

The results of Albert Davis's 1984 study indicated a departure from the results of the analysis of Caldecott books found in Weitzman's study done in the 1970's. He found that in non-sexist books, selected from bibliographies published by feminist and women's groups,

that women were "models of independence", showing behaviors normally attributed to males. Other researchers have reported that in non-sexist books which have female main characters that the females exhibit negative behavioral characteristics because of their independence. Would the same comments be made if this kind of behavior were attributed to males? In the discussion of Davis's content analysis of non-sexist books it was indicated that there might be overcompensation in the characterizations of the females as a result of so many years of stereotyping. That, in fact, these books showed the non-sexist females being more independent, more self-reliant, more spirited than any male characters and at the expense of the male characters, in essence bending over backwards to reverse the negative stereotypes that had pervaded the industry for so long (Davis, 1984).

Judith Kinman's analysis of the Newbery Medal Award Books from 1977 to 1984 showed an improvement of more realistic portrayals of women's roles in these books as compared with the previous two decades. She wrote that "nonsexist reading material is needed during those years when a child is establishing a sense of identity and social order" (Kinman, 1985, p. 886).

The results of a 1987 study by Katharine Heintz of Caldecott books from 1971-1984 indicated that the children's picture books still have male characters outnumbering

females. The females are still shown in stereotyped roles and have three times fewer the number of career choices; though there has been some improvement since the Weitzman study. Changes in the curriculum need to be made so that boys are afforded the chances to know and understand the concerns and feelings of girls (Carlson, 1989, p. 30). It is not being suggested that titles be removed from the curriculum or libraries, but that appropriate books be added and it be mandated that a more balanced, realistic and nonsexist curriculum be offered (Alfonso, 1986; Applebee, 1979; Engel, 1981). Scott and Schau (1985) found that "pupils who are exposed to sex-equitable materials are more likely than others to 1) have gender-balanced knowledge of people in society, 2) develop more flexible attitudes and more accurate sex role knowledge, and 3) imitate role behaviors contained in the materials" (Scott and Schau, 1985, p.228).

Creany's 1990 dissertation discussed the effect of stereotypes and literature and found that children can find needed role models, which might be missing in their own lives, in books. "Literary materials can affect children's attitudes not only about others but also about themselves" (Creany, 1990, p. 58). Children reading books that feature positive role models for all children and that show characters with diverse abilities will provide positive reinforcement and help to build positive self-images

(Kinman, 1985; Mistry, 1979; Pyle, 1976; Schau and Tittle, 1985).

...negative conditioning may occur in the classroom because literature programs seem to present a welter of inadequate female characters for discussion and reality-checking... Because women characters usually play a secondary or minor role, adolescents may subconsciously assume that women have less significance than men (Beaven, 1971, p.62).

There are lists available of books that depict women in non-stereotyped and non-traditional careers (Miller, 1993; Newman, 1982; Pilon, 1977). Teachers and librarians can utilize these lists to recommend books which challenge stereotypic views and situations (Hearn, 1978). A number of these lists were developed in the mid-1970's as a reaction to Weitzman's and Nilsen's studies. There is some evidence of changes being instituted by authors and textbook companies. However, older books are still being used in our classrooms and homes without any disclaimers or additional curriculum added to counteract the evident stereotypes (Winkeljohann and Gallant, 1980).

Children's reading material, then, can constitute a potentially important avenue for social change with regard to the elimination of sexism (Scott and Feldman-Summers, 1979, p. 401).

Reader Response Theory

The theory of reader response says that the meaning of the text comes from an interaction between the text and the reader; between the content of the author's message and the prior experiences of the reader. Each reader will

understand and comprehend differently because each reader's background is different. This can make teachers uncomfortable because it creates a void in trying to evaluate the student's understanding and knowledge; and in addition a feeling of losing "control" by the teacher (Chase and Hynd, 1987). "Any activity is compatible with reader response as long as it allows for multiple correct responses and the sharing of ideas and information" (Chase and Hynd, 1987, p.532). The advantages to using reader response are many. Eeds and Peterson's (1991) article about their experiences with teachers utilizing reader response groups has been very positive. They found that although reader response groups are a departure from traditional groups, the teacher learns to accept sharing the literature with the students rather than totally directing the discussion. The student becomes very involved in the reading as they come to understand that they help to determine the meaning of the text (Cairney, 1991; Christensen, 1991). The students gain an understanding of the interpretations of others and can become more empathetic. They are encouraged to apply the knowledge and insights gained to other texts and also to their own lives. They gain an understanding of the perspectives and experiences of others as well (Bird, 1988; Chase and Hynd, 1987; Holt, 1986; Lefever-Davis, 1991; Short, 1990;). Reading and sharing together can also help an individual

gain a new understanding of oneself (Samway, 1991). Regie Routman wrote in her new book, Invitations regarding literature discussion groups: "a literature discussion group gives every student an opportunity to speak and be heard. The teacher is a member of the small group not its president" (Routman, 1991, p. 123).

The reader, we can say, interprets the text. Or we can say, the text produces a response in the reader (Rosenblatt, 1978, The Reader, the Text, the Poem, p.16).

Louise Rosenblatt's writings on literature response have become classics and a point of departure for other researchers. Rosenblatt developed a transactional theory of literary response in 1938 in which she discusses the relationship between the reader and the written text. She feels that because every reader has different backgrounds and past histories each experience that a reader has with a text will end up being different.

The importance of the cultural or social context is stressed, but transactional theory sees the convention or code, as, e.g., in language, as always individually internalized. Each reader draws on a personal reservoir of linguistic and life experiences. The new meaning, the literary work, whether poetic or nonpoetic, is constituted during the actual transaction between reader and text (Rosenblatt in Flood and Lapp, 1991, p. 60).

The linkage of the text with the student's past experiences and own life will make the text more relevant and come alive for the student. Through literature we can learn to be empathetic of the experiences of others and can

learn to identify with those who are different than ourselves--all in a non-threatening manner. Teachers cannot avoid discussing issues concerning human behavior, right and wrong or the questionable actions of characters in the texts.

The teacher would do neither literature nor students a service if he tried to evade ethical issues. He will be exerting some kind of influence, positive or negative, through his success or failure in helping the student to develop habits of thoughtful ethical judgement...The literature classroom can stimulate the students themselves to develop a thoughtful approach to human behavior (Rosenblatt, Literature as Exploration, 1938, 1968, p. 18).

Rosenblatt feels that students need to be given the opportunity to make the text their own in order for it to really have any lasting meaning. When discussing a book, children are not forced to take a stand but to exchange with others the many ideas which come from the literature and their own life experiences.

The youth needs to be given the opportunity and the courage to approach literature personally, to let it mean something to him directly. The classroom situation and the relationship with the teacher should create a feeling of security. He should be made to feel that his own response to books, even though it may not resemble the standard critical comments, is worth expressing (Rosenblatt in Literature as Exploration, 1938, 1968, p.66).

Purves and Beach (1972) discussed literary response as involving the reader, the piece of literature and the situation in which it is read. It is not a static process. What the reader brings to the text as much as what is

written determines what kind of response there will be (Galda, 1983). "We know that readers are interested more in the content of literature than in its form. We know that some readers can be influenced by what they read--emotionally, attitudinally, and intellectually" (Purves and Beach, 1972, p.35). Their theory asserts that the relationship between the reader and the text is not a closed circle but is continually being modified even during the reading of the text and after. This relationship "may result in a modification of concepts, attitudes, or feelings" (Purves and Beach, 1972, p. 178).

Another way of encouraging response to literature is the use of literature response journals or logs. This method provides a means of collecting ongoing thoughts and reflections during the time the book is being read. The log can reflect the student's feelings about the book, what might be confusing, surprising or captivating and also any questions they might have (Hart, 1992; Parsons, 1990). This journal then can be used as a vehicle for beginning discussion. "In literature study, the revision occurs on three fronts: through multiple re-readings of the text, through the reflective literature logs, and through the small group discussion" (Bird, 1988, p.13).

In summary, the review of related research has shown an improvement in the awareness that women should be treated equally in texts. However, the research has also shown that

this awareness has not always been acted upon. Pre-adolescents have been virtually ignored in studies up to now. The primary focus has been either preschoolers and the primary grades or college-age and adults. It is hoped that this study will begin to rectify this situation by looking at the concerns and needs of the pre-teens during those very impressionable years. Utilizing selected literature, reader response groups and journals will hopefully help us to gain some insights into what is important to this age group and if the literature makes an impression upon them.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine if the reading of literature with strong women characters had an effect on the sex stereotypes and occupational attitudes of sixth grade children and their participation in literature discussion groups.

The target group of this study was a sixth grade class at a San Diego city elementary school. The school is racially and socioeconomically mixed as a result of busing through the Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment and Magnet programs. This class of thirty students had been divided by the teacher into three groups of ten students each for language arts and each of these groups was representative of the ethnic, gender and academic makeup of the class. This school's program has endorsed and instituted the concept of detracking. One reading group from within this self-contained classroom was the focus of this study for data analysis. However, the entire class actually participated in all of the activities of the study and were unaware that any one group was being designated for data collection. This one group was selected on the basis being the most verbal and consistent in participating; but by having the entire class participate, the views and comments of the other children would be available for inclusion in the

study.

The Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents, an instrument developed by Galambos, Petersen, Richards and Gitelson was used as a pre and post test. This instrument was developed in 1985 to answer the need for a more appropriate way to measure the attitudes of adolescents than was previously available. This instrument has been validated and correlated with other sex role and self-esteem inventories such as; the Bem Sex Role Inventory, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Spence and Helmreich Attitudes Towards Women Scale. The researchers used Cronbach's alpha to establish the reliability of the instrument. The average of these were .78 for the boys and .72 for the girls, indicating a "high level of consistency, particularly for a scale of only 12 items" (Galambos, Petersen, Richards and Gitelson, 1985, p.349). The instrument is based on the short form of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale by Spence, Helmreich and Stapp. Permission to use the inventory was granted by the authors (see attached letter, Appendix A). The inventory consists of a list of twelve statements which the respondents are asked to rate on a four point Likert scale. There is only one form to this instrument (see Appendix B).

The Brooks Occupational Survey, Revised was developed by Lois Brooks then revised by Diane Stark for her 1986 doctoral dissertation (see Appendix C). The reliability of

the instrument established during the original research and was determined by a test, re-test method and yielded a t-value of 5.37 with a probability of 0.000 which indicated high reliability according to the researchers (Stark, 1986). The instrument was designed to assess occupational stereotyping and in this study only served to enhance the data as it was not used as a pre and post measure. Permission to use the instrument was obtained by telephone from Diane Stark.

The researcher was in communication with the students' parents by letter at the beginning of the study informing them about the addition to the curriculum and after the completion of each novel (see Appendix D). The parents were asked to give feedback and many letters and comments were received at the conclusion of the study in response to a final letter (see Appendix E).

The study commenced with the pretest and then an introduction of short stories followed by the reading of novels. The study was completed within two and a half months time.

The literature for this study included three short stories and three novels. The three short stories were : "X" by Lois Gould, "A Few Cents More" by Sara Kash, and "The Secret Soldier" by Ann McGovern. The novels were: Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred Taylor, Number the Stars by Lois Lowry and The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle by

Avi. The criteria for choosing the short stories and the novels was the same and included:

1. female main characters
2. females characters who did not let their gender get in the way of full participation in activities or adventures and did not relinquish to stereotyped behavior when doing so
3. no obvious contrasting negative male figures
4. well-written interesting story
5. State of California list of Recommended Reading in Literature (with the exception of the short stories)

The researcher participated in reader response exchanges with the participants and acted as teacher-participant. These discussions groups met for 20-30 minutes each time in a side room next to the classroom and the discussions of all the groups were tape recorded. These tapes were later transcribed for future reference and analysis purposes. The researcher spent approximately four days a week for eight weeks at the school, each time meeting with all three groups, one right after the other, rotating their order each time so that each group would have some time to read in class. The researcher remained flexible regarding the time spent in the classroom and made an effort to fit into the plans of the classroom teacher in order to limit the disruptions in the schedule.

In concert with the reading of the texts and the literature discussion sessions, literature response journals were kept by each student. There was some direction as to what the children recorded in these journals. The children were to record new words, their reactions to the story, any questions they might have and answer any directives from the researcher. The children were asked to utilize their journals during and after the reading of designated chapters and bring their journals to the discussion group. The reader response discussion groups met most every day after certain assigned chapters had been read. The discussion groups met for approximately thirty minutes each time and focus points were used to aid in eliciting response after an initial attempt at having the students respond in a totally open manner. These focus points were used both for the journals and the discussion group. Some examples of these focus points included:

1. Write a response to the chapter.
2. Did any part make you angry, sad?
3. Did you have something like this happen in your life?
4. Can you think of another way of handling a situation?
5. What would you change in the chapter, story?
6. Predictions.

7. How has your opinion changed regarding a certain person?
8. Certain new words can promote discussion.
9. Describe the relationship between certain characters.
10. How does the character feel about...?
11. Talk to the characters, give advice, ask questions.
12. Write about your feelings, opinions, likes or dislikes about the text (Hancock, 1993, p. 472).

There was a change regarding the journals after the completion of the first novel as a result of evaluating the journals at that time. The evaluation of these journals showed that most students needed more direction as they were inexperienced at journal writing and some of the children showed poor follow-through. The journals were collected at the completion of the reading of each text, partly to assure that they did not get lost.

Although the majority of the discussion groups were conducted in small groups, a few times discussions were conducted with the whole class; particularly when introducing a new book, as the classroom teacher had requested the opportunity to observe the researcher at work. However, this whole class instruction only occurred at the most about one time per book.

Since the students were studying these novels as part

of their curriculum, activities were developed and scheduled to add to their understanding of the novels and their subject matter. For example, after reading Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, some students and the researcher brought in foods that had been mentioned in the book for all to taste. In addition, after the completion of reading the book the students had the chance to see the movie that was based on the book. They were given the opportunity to discuss the differences between the two. The students also viewed the video, A Long Walk Home. This served as a vehicle to advance the historical perspective twenty years closer to the present.

The short story picture book, Rose Blanche by Roberto Innocenti was used to help introduce the subject matter of the second novel, Number the Stars. The Sabbath ceremony from the book was presented to the class by the researcher and students from the class and accompanied by traditional foods. At the conclusion of the novel, a speaker who had experienced the Holocaust first hand was invited to speak to the class.

In addition, there were culminating activities for each novel which were due a short time after the completion of reading each novel. There was a list of suggested culminating activities for each book, but students could have proposed additional topics for consideration (see Appendix F).

A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis was used to examine the data. Five sources of data were used: 1) pre and post test results of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents, which utilizes a Likert-type scale, 2) audio tapes of the literature response group sessions, 3) the individual journals of the students, 4) the observations of the researcher, 5) the revised version of Brooks Occupational Survey. The literature response groups were videotaped three different times during the study. A tape recorder was used at the same time so as to aid in the transcription process. These various sources of information provided a more collaborative model of analysis as the children were asked to read, write and discuss the text.

James Flood and Diane Lapp's Coding System for Analyzing Literary Discussion was used to analyze the transcriptions of the literature response group sessions. This coding system was used because it could be customized and adapted to focus on the areas of interest of this study unlike other available coding systems. This coding system analyzes the discussion by examining the content of the discussions. Each response from the students was analyzed and classified into one of four levels. A more detailed description is included in Chapter Four, however a short summary with some examples is provided here.

Level one is entitled communication procedures and

there are ten choices within this level. Agree asks if the respondent is agreeing with the previous comment ("Yes", "Okay", "Right"). Maintain is staying on the topic (John-"It says it though in the next chapter, I mean when he's with Zachariah down below that it was the dirk that she had gotten from Zachariah." Marisa- "Yah, and the dirk that she used to climb up the mast was the dirk that she had gotten from Zachariah."). Expand is expanding on the current topic (Teacher-"Where's she going to go, where is she?" Student-"Middle of the ocean." Girl- "They can't go anywhere." Robbie- "They could take a little life boat."). Encourage is asking for more information or getting another speaker to respond (Terrance-"Because Cassie has a better part or something like that?" Teacher-"That's a good question. Why was the story written through the eyes of Cassie and not Stacy?"). Question is either the teacher or the students asking questions (Shauna-"How could there be mines in the water? Because they know that the fisherman go out to fish all the time."). Answer means the questions of others being answered (John-"Well. what you could do, is she the manager of the place? Terrance- "No, assistant manager."). Direct are statements or responses leading the discussion in a certain direction (Teacher-"Couldn't you just cry for someone because of the things that they've done. TJ really messed up his life, didn't he?"). Redirect is bringing back the discussion to the topic after a

diversion (Teacher- "That's not what we are talking about today. Why was it important that the girls be one of the crowd?"). Retell is telling what happened in the novel (Marisa-"So Anne Marie said when she was like a little girl she was like____and she remembers sitting on her father's lap..."). Response is other responses that do not fit into the other categories ("I don't know" or "Okay" are two examples).

Level two is the thinking process and consists of seven choices examining the thinking process behind the response. Synthesis is a response which reflects some thought on the topic (Boy-"Same thing I said but in different terms."). Elaboration is the continuation of someone's response (John-"Well, they could like go somewhere and tell someone, but it wouldn't really matter, because they were black." Boy-"Because they wouldn't do anything anyway because they were black."). Evaluation is evaluating the text or someone's comment (John-"Well the resistance avoided the soldiers, so why couldn't one girl to all these different soldiers not do this from the resistance maybe a few hundred people."). Explanation is explaining terms, text or comments (Boy-"On Chapter 10. Let's see. Okay. They were going down to the store, I mean not to the store. They went down to Willy's."). Conclusion is concluding a topic or coming to a conclusion regarding the text or comments (Teacher-"Do you have anything else you'd like to say?"

Students- "No.>"). Interpretation is interpreting text or someone's comment (Marisa- "I thought Chapter 5 was pretty scary. I know I'd be scared. I felt sorry for them and I don't understand why the soldiers are so mean.>"). Application is when the student applies something from the text to their own lives or applies a lesson from the text to their interpretation (Teacher- "So we have five people that would have told on TJ and four who would have done the same thing. Has anything like that ever happened to you?" Kevin-"I wasn't really framed, but I did something bad like that, but it was worse. My friend who was locked out of his house, so we went over to his house....").

Level three is Sources of Comments includes five choices that determine if the responses are text-based or from personal experience. Prior Knowledge of Self is a response of a personal nature (John- "I don't think I could do all that she did because she was, I don't know I just couldn't do it.>"). Prior Knowledge of Text refers to speaking about other books in relationship to the text at hand. In this study it also was interpreted to mean, speaking specifically about the text without repeating dialogue (Kevin- "TJ went by himself." John-"I think that he would be found guilty either way because it said in the log that Charlotte was lost in the sea and that she's there.>"). Text Memory is relating specific details of text (Marisa- "They've ruined her journal and told her that she

could never speak of that journey again and made her stay in her room."). Text Topic are responses related to the text or the subject matter (Shauna- I think that besides that part I think it was a little more cheerful than chapter 9 because they went to like that church thing they had on."). Text Rereading is reading dialogue or text during the discussion group (John- "That means he's dead. Listen. On the next page it says...").

Level four had three parts which were part of the Domain-Specific part of the analysis. This part allows the addition of categories to address specific areas of the individual study. To add to the ease of the instrument the three parts of Level four were entitled, Levels four, five and six. Level Four was named Gender, but the purpose was to keep track of who was doing the speaking. Level Five asked the question if women or girls were mentioned in the response. The answer was purely yes or no. Level Six rated the answer asked in level five on a five point Likert-scale of very positive to very negative with a neutral option as well.

Some additional pieces of information were gathered to try and determine which kinds of books were available to the children. An informal survey of the school library was conducted to determine if the collection offered books that were more inclusive and sex-balanced. The librarian and classroom teacher were interviewed as to what books they

utilize and recommend to students. The questioning was done to ascertain what kinds of books the children are being introduced and exposed to and if the collection was up-to-date.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of the Data

The purpose of the study was to investigate if the reading of literature with strong women characters affected the sex stereotypes and occupational attitudes of children and their participation in literature discussion groups. A major focus for garnering information in this study was the use of the literature discussion groups and written journals to elicit additional responses from the children when studying the literature.

This chapter will address the results of Flood and Lapp's Coding System which was used to interpret the transcriptions of the discussion groups. The childrens' journals will be explored and samples shown to illustrate the various points. The outcomes of two quantitative instruments; The Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents and The Brooks Occupational Survey will be discussed. In addition, the childrens' responses to learning the focus of the study and the parental responses after completion of the study will be shared.

Flood and Lapp's Coding System for Analyzing Literary Discussions is divided into four categories: communication procedures (Level one), thinking process (Level two), sources of comments (Level three) and domain-specific comments (Levels four to six). Each category requires decisions to be made about the responses that were made by

the students and the researcher during the course of the study. In this study all of the discussions of the focus group, nearly two thousand responses, were coded and analyzed in each of these six ways. Each response indicates a different turn by a student or teacher in the discussion group, so that a response could be as short as one word or as long as a paragraph. The following discussion will explain each of the categories and subcategories, giving examples from the study. In addition, some of the examples will show how the quality of the students' responses changed from book one, to book two to book three. The transcripts of the two remaining groups were also closely examined but they were not coded or entered into the computer, but they were available for inclusion in the reporting of the study when deemed appropriate. It was determined during the course of the study, by the participation of the researcher and the examination of the transcripts, that the focus group's discussions were representative of the entire class.

The sentence that was coded according to the category which is under discussion is designated with a (*).

Level One--Communication Procedures: Ten different types of communication procedures were examined. In each case, only one of these procedures can be chosen. These

selections include: agree, maintain, expand, encourage, question, answer, direct, redirect, retell and response (see Table 1 and Figure 1). The major outcomes from this category for all students together is shown in Figure 1A.

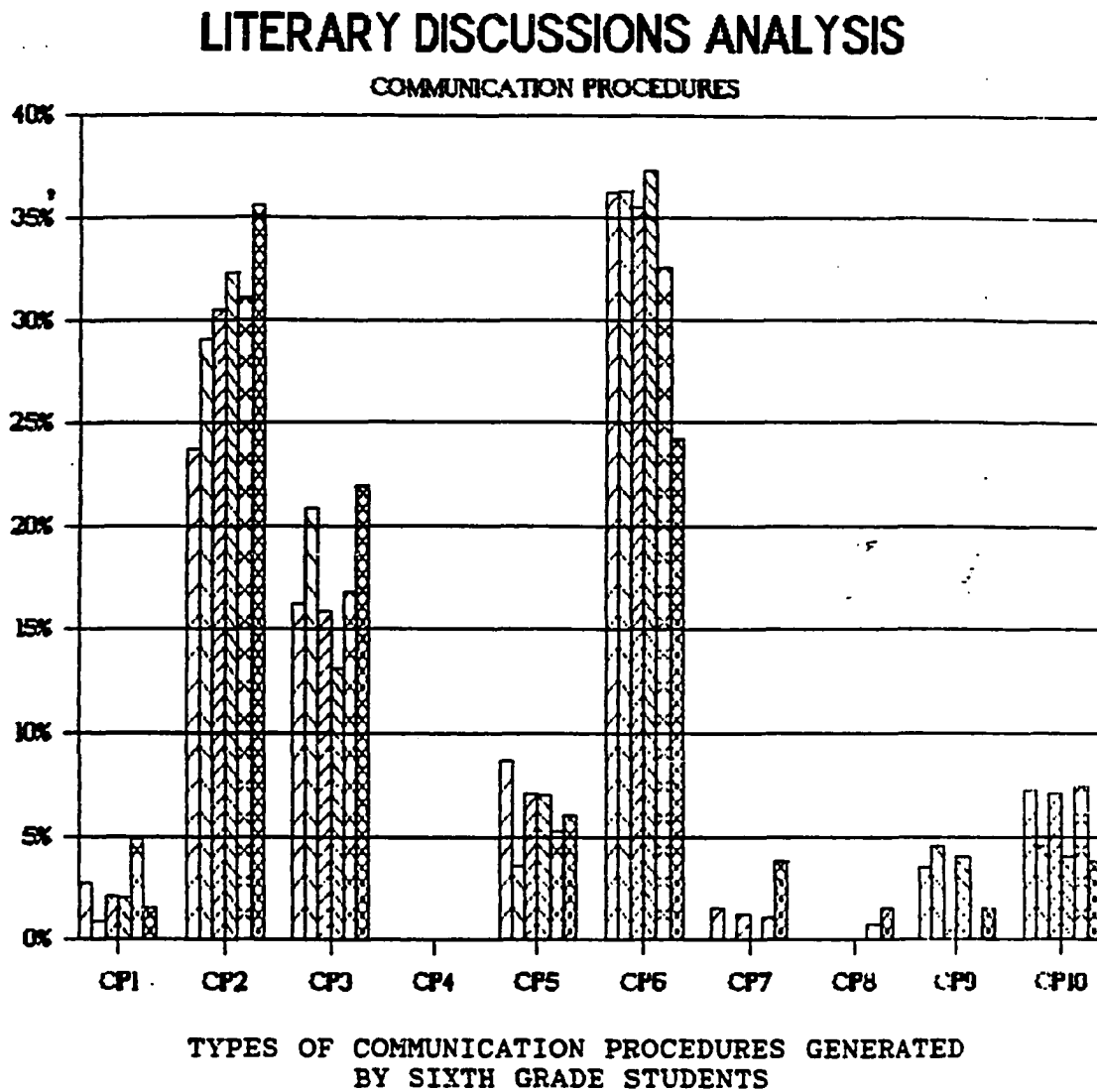
Table # 1

FLOOD AND LAPP'S CODING SYSTEM
FOR ANALYZING LITERARY DISCUSSIONS

LEVEL 1: COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

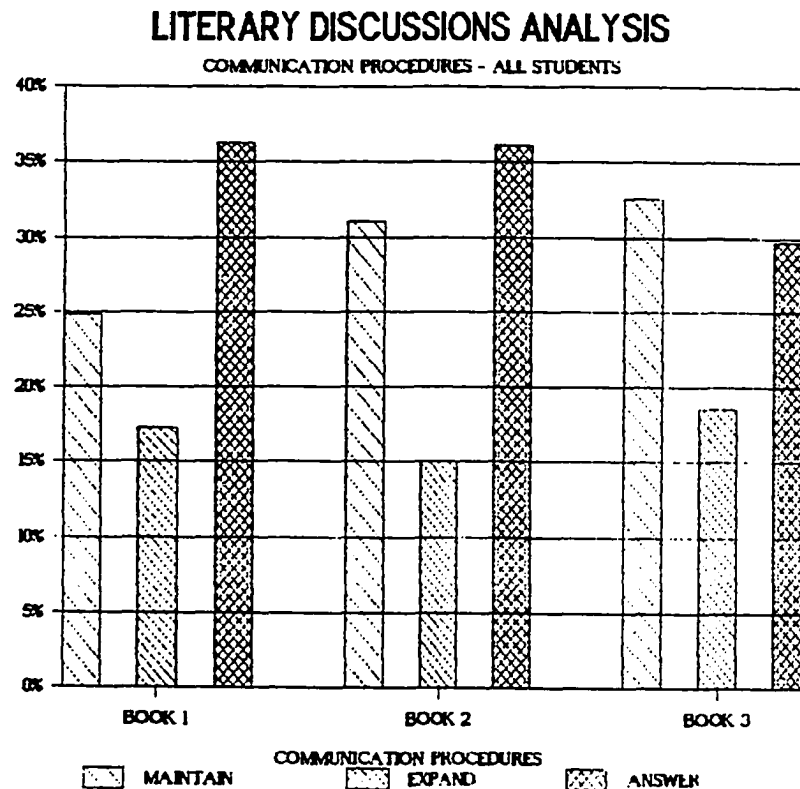
	TEACHER								MALE STUDENTS							
	BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL		BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
CP 1	6	2%	2	1%	2	2%	10	2%	11	3%	5	2%	15	5%	29	3%
CP 2	28	9%	2	1%	0	0%	30	5%	95	24%	73	31%	83	31%	252	28%
CP 3	14	4%	7	4%	0	0%	21	3%	65	16%	38	16%	45	17%	148	16%
CP 4	17	5%	21	12%	11	9%	49	8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
CP 5	195	62%	104	60%	96	75%	396	64%	35	9%	17	7%	14	5%	66	7%
CP 6	15	5%	15	9%	4	3%	34	6%	145	36%	85	36%	87	33%	318	35%
CP 7	32	10%	15	9%	5	4%	52	8%	6	2%	3	1%	3	1%	12	1%
CP 8	5	2%	0	0%	1	1%	6	1%	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%	2	0%
CP 9	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	1	0%	14	4%	1	0%	0	0%	15	2%
CP 10	4	1%	6	3%	9	7%	19	3%	29	7%	17	7%	20	7%	66	7%
TURNS	316		173		128		617		400		239		267		906	
	FEMALE STUDENTS								STUDENTS TOTAL							
	BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL		BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
CP 1	1	1%	2	2%	2	2%	5	1%	12	2%	7	2%	15	4%	34	3%
CP 2	32	29%	32	32%	47	36%	112	33%	127	25%	105	31%	130	33%	363	29%
CP 3	23	21%	13	13%	29	22%	65	19%	88	17%	51	15%	74	19%	214	17%
CP 4	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
CP 5	4	4%	7	7%	8	6%	19	6%	39	8%	24	7%	22	6%	85	7%
CP 6	40	36%	37	37%	32	24%	110	32%	185	36%	122	36%	119	30%	427	34%
CP 7	0	0%	0	0%	5	4%	5	1%	6	1%	3	1%	8	2%	17	1%
CP 8	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	4	1%	4	0%
CP 9	5	5%	4	4%	2	2%	11	3%	19	4%	5	1%	2	1%	26	2%
CP 10	5	5%	4	4%	5	4%	14	4%	34	7%	21	6%	25	6%	80	6%
TURNS	110		99		132		341		510		338		399		1,247	

Figure # 1



(Each group of 6 bars represents (from left to right):
book 1 - males, book 1 - females, book 2 - males, book 2 - females,
book 3 - males and book 3 - females.)

Figure # 1 A



1-Agree--the response agrees with the previous comment (see Figure 1).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

Teacher: Are there any other alternative ways the Logan children could have dealt with T.J.?

Geoffrey: They could try to help him.

* James: Yah.

Number the Stars:

Kevin: But it was most likely to be knock-out drops because the mother she didn't want Peter to use the stuff on the baby.

* Terrance: Yah, that's what made me ask what it was cause I thought it was something bad.

The percentage of these kind of statements was less than five percent overall in all three novels.

2-Maintain--maintaining or staying on the current topic of discussion (see Figures 1 & 2).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

- Marisa: But, I have a question. They said that because he said that three black people at the store but the Sims are not black, are they?
- Teacher: You're right. Are the Sims black?
- John: No. They're white.
- * James: Because they would give him a stocking they wouldn't know what color they were and since they didn't give him one, they automatically thought that it was all blacks that robbed the store.

Number the Stars:

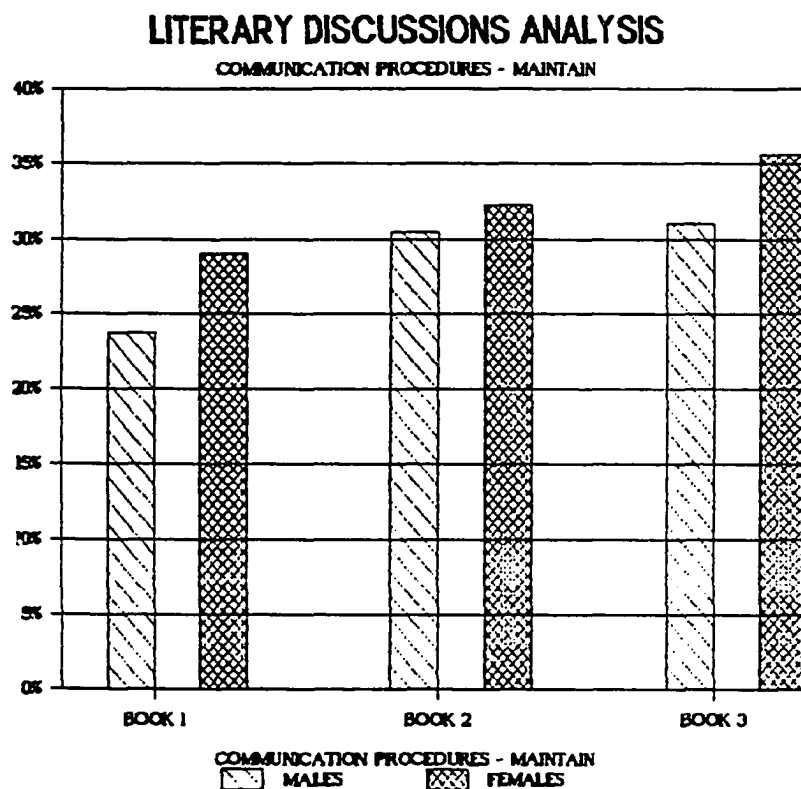
- Geoffrey: Well I was kind of upset that Pete got shot by the resistance in the end. I didn't like that at all.
- Kevin: I think even though the war is over and things, they're not quite going to go back to normal because Peter and Liz are dead. You have all these material things but two people in your life are dead.
- Geoffrey: Nasty.
- * John: Well I thought it was a sort of harsh ending because it was, they went away to Sweden and I thought she would come back after the, I mean, Ellen would come back after the war ended, but after when she didn't then I thought it was a sort of harsh ending and that Peter got shot, that we found out what really happened to Liz, the car accident, cause it was one, but, so.

Charlotte Doyle:

- Marisa: Yah and the dirk that she used to climb up the mast was the dirk that Captain Jaggery gave her.
- * John: I know but Captain Jaggery's the one that he gave Charlotte was the dirk that was in her cabin because after she joined the crew she went into the forecandle and he went in and got all his stuff out of the cabin and put it in a forecandle and he took the dirk at the same time.
- Marisa: That's not true because Charlotte said that she couldn't find the dirk.

The amount of maintaining the topic increased with each book. The ability to maintain the topic showed not only an increase in the art of discussion, but also involvement in the literature or topic. The boys went from 23% to 32% by the end of Charlotte Doyle. The girls began at 28% and went to 36% by the end of Charlotte Doyle showing that girls maintained more than the boys. The girls began at a higher level of maintaining the topic and also continued to do so.

Figure # 2



3-Expand--expanding on the current concept, idea or topic (see Figures 1 & 3).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

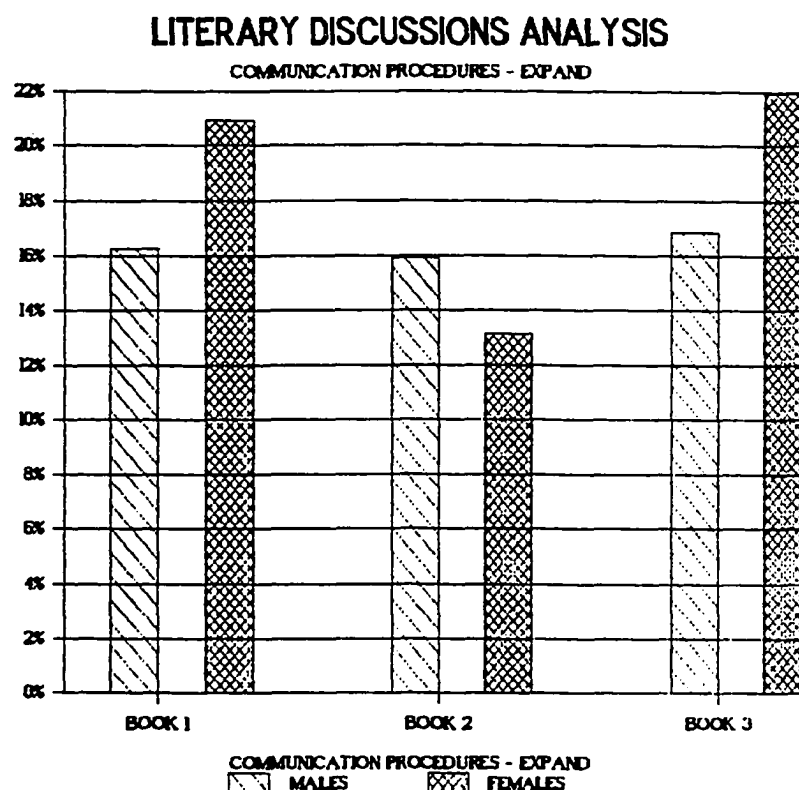
- Robbie: When Cassie had went into the forest with her Pa that they should that um they talked about stuff like to understand that Pa meet again and in trouble. I thought it was a good lecture.
- Teacher: Why?
- Robbie: Because Cassie needed to know that information.
- * Kevin: Um, it's about the fig tree and um I think um when Mr. Logan was talking about a fig tree I think that he the fig tree represented a black person and all the other trees were representing white people and the fig tree had to do whatever it had to do to survive but it would never be as big as the other trees around it.

Number the Stars:

- Teacher: What was it about the King and everyone being his bodyguard?
- John: The Danish people being the bodyguard of the King.
- Robbie: They protected him so he wouldn't get hurt.
- *John: Cause if the King died than they wouldn't have a leader.

The girls (21-22%) expanded more than the boys (17%) though both remained fairly stable throughout the three novels. The girls did drop to 13% during Number the Stars but did regain during Charlotte Doyle. However, by examining the text the girls overall expanded more than the boys. The above examples show the expanding in answer to questions by the teacher/researcher. The expanding occurred both in answers to prompting or questions and also with the students expounding on a fellow student's comment.

Figure # 3



4-Encourage--encouraging another speaker or it could be a request for more information (see Figure 1).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

*Teacher: Good. You understood what big Ma was talking about when she talked about her relationship with Cassie's mama, and that she had other children--the girls-- what happened to them?

Charlotte Doyle:

Teacher: She's scared, Why?

Angela: I don't know, she's just acting it, just believing her today and like trying____just acting like she's scared.

Shauna: Well, I think that she's like____because she was like being nice to the crew and listening to their stories and stuff but then she'd go and tell the captain like everything they did that had to do with him you know like if they were talking about him or if they didn't do something.

*Teacher: What do you think about what Shauna's saying? How would you feel?

Students did very little encouraging. The teacher tried to encourage but the students did not pick up this skill and did not copy it.

5-Question--teacher or student asking questions. (see Figure 1).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

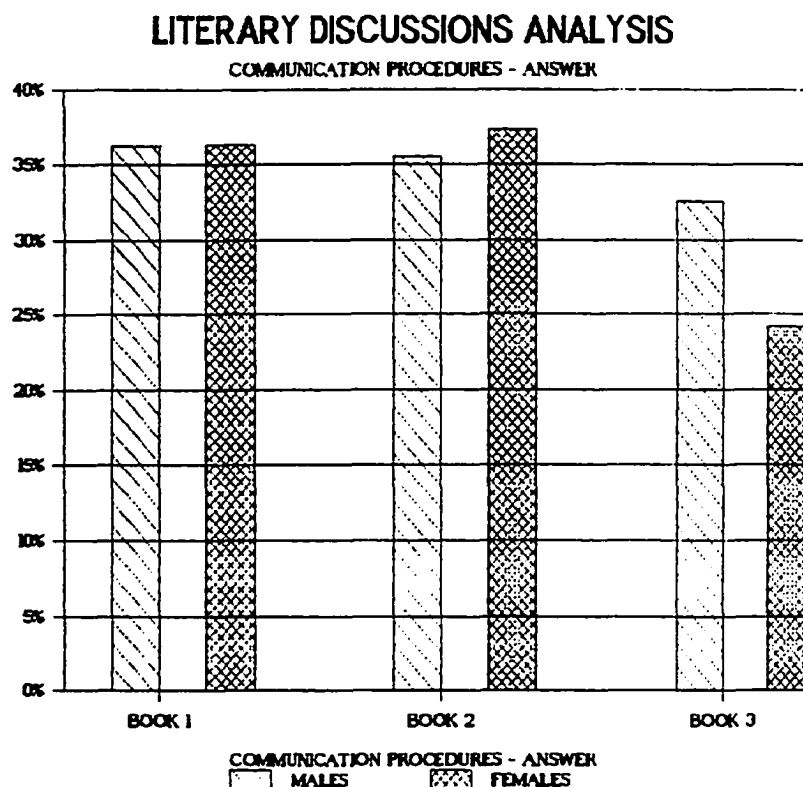
*Teacher: How would you feel if you had Mr. Morrison around?

Number the Stars:

*Terrance: What I don't get is how they came in that little country and take over. How they do that? They just come in and take over like that?

The number of questions asked by the boys declined from 8% to 5% over the three books; whereas the number of questions asked by the girls increased slightly after the first book. The percent of teacher questions increased from 62% during book one to 75% by book three. This together with the drop in teacher participation indicated that most teacher turns (discussed during Domain-Specific Comments, Level 4) were questions to encourage participation or to guide discussion.

Figure # 4



6-Answer--answering questions of others (see Figures 1 & 4).

Number the Stars:

Teacher: So they were taking a big risk in hiding her.
 Yes? What do you think? Why do you think they did it?

*Robbie: Because they were friends.

Charlotte Doyle:

Teacher: What were your feelings regarding that?

*James: Scared. I was frightened for her.

The number of questions being answered decreased by the third book. Boys went from 37% to 33% and girls went from 37% to 24%. As the students became more involved in the texts and more comfortable responding in the discussion groups, they moved away from purely answering questions into more varied types of responses. This showed a increase in

the ability to discuss the subject as the students discourse became less simple and also reflected involvement in the literature.

7-direct--statements which lead the discussion in a certain direction other than where it is at the moment (see Figure 1).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

*Teacher: Can any of you take the story that papa told to Cassie and relate it to your own lives? About the fig tree. I mean what if I, as your mom, told you that story. Could you learn something from it, or would it teach you anything?

Charlotte Doyle:

John: Well like she says I think that's true that her father wouldn't approve of this because back then women were supposed to be taking care and being ladylike.

*Geoffrey: I wonder like how she didn't fall. I know her legs got caught in something. I didn't know what it was. Was it the net?

Robbie: Rat lines.

A small percentage of students, less than 3% directed discussion. Even teacher direction declined from 10% to 5% by the third book, as the students became more involved the discussion began to flow more easily without needing forced direction.

8-Redirect--bringing the discussion back to the topic after a diversion to unrelated issues (see Figure 1).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

Kevin: I was going to say one more thing. It was about the fighting. My brother and I, we always fight, and like he trips me and he

pins me down, but then I get up and sling him across the room, and my mom comes in and he's crying and I get in trouble. But he's been standing on me and stuff.

- * Teacher: Sound like a fair fight. Do you think Stacy did TJ a favor by not telling on him, and by accepting that punishment?

Charlotte Doyle:

James: Punched my back, upside the back when I was choking and I was choking on carne asada meat. It was good too, but then I didn't want to eat and I was crying and my mom made me finish eating.

- * Robbie: I think the captain will come out because he heard the scream. He will ask what happened and give the crew lashings each.

A very small amount of redirecting was done throughout the study. Most likely this was the case because the students tended to stay on the topic and straying from the topic was minimal.

9-Retell--summarizing and retelling about the text (see Figure 1).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

- *John: He lifted up the truck because he asked one of them to the car, to move the truck, so he could pass by and Mr. Wallace said I will when I'm good and ready, and so Mr. Morrison got down and decided to move it himself. So he picked up the car and moved it out of the way so he could pass.

There was a small amount of retelling by students, less than 5%, through all three novels. The girls, one girl in particular, did more retelling than the boys and the other girls. In fact, retelling was this one girl's major way of responding in the discussion group and even in her journal. It seemed to take her a longer time to get beyond retelling

and reflect on the book.

10-Response--any response that does not fit into the other nine categories (see Figure 1).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

John: I predict that TJ will be hung and I thought this was a sad chapter with all the burning of the cotton and the Averys not being_____. The Averys and what happened to them and I felt that it was a very sad chapter because TJ was taken away to the chain gang probably, which he will die.

Shauna: I know that. I said

*Geoffrey: He's not finished man. I mean ladies, I mean woman, whatever you are.

Charlotte Doyle:

John: Well I disagree with Marisa. Because if Keech didn't want to help the captain also, why would she have Zachariah down there when he gets

*Marisa: Wait, wait, what? Say that again.

The boys stayed relatively stable, around 8% of their discussion mode fit into this category of responses. The girls showed a one percent decline from 4% to 3%. Sometimes the boys' answers were just "yah" or "no" without any indication of meaning, just to say something.

Level Two--Thinking Process: Seven different types of processes were coded with one type of thinking chosen for each response by teacher and students. These selections include: synthesis, elaboration, evaluation, explanation, conclusion, interpretation and application (see Table 2 and Figure 5). The major outcomes for this category for all students together is shown in Figure 5A.

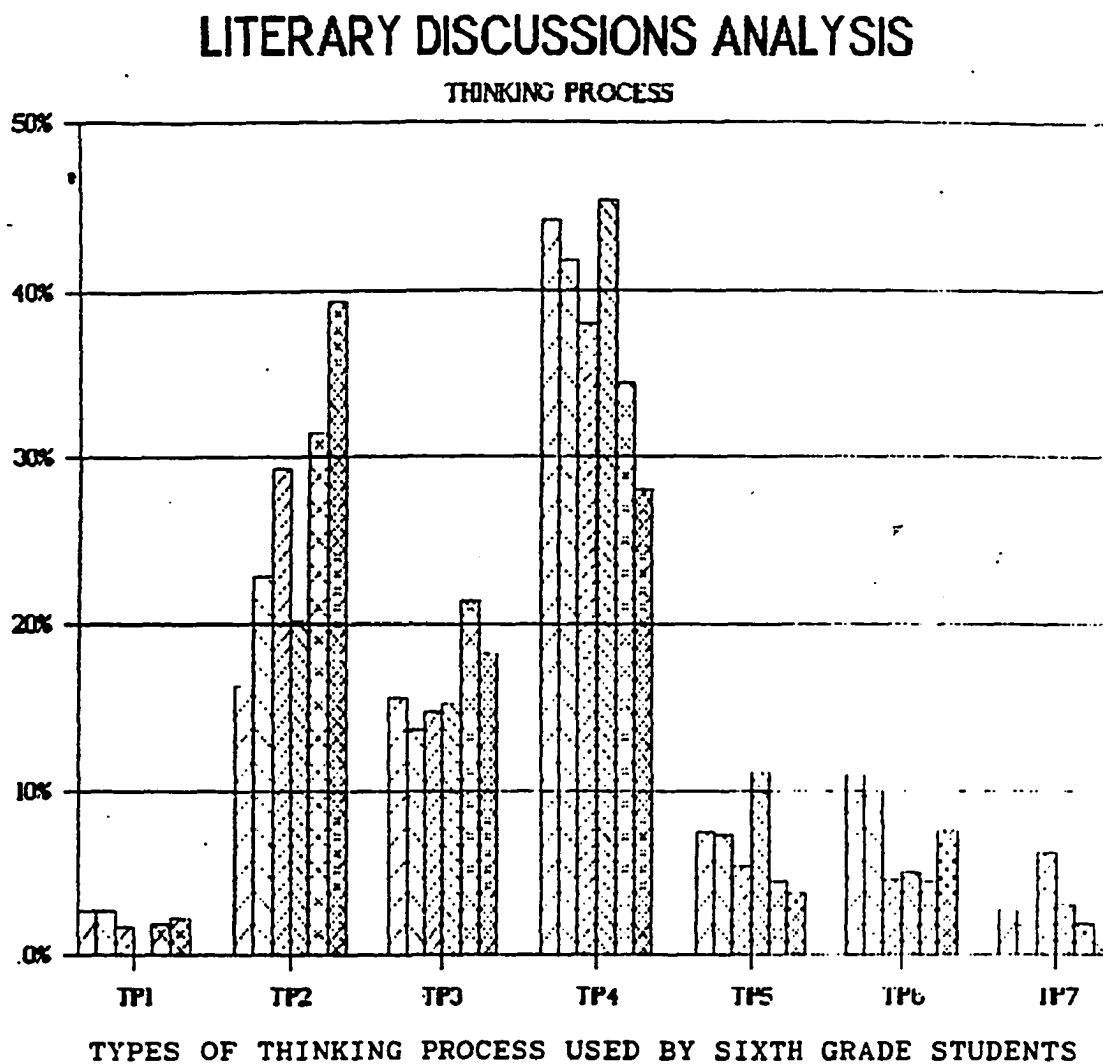
Table #2

FLOOD AND LAPP'S CODING SYSTEM
FOR ANALYZING LITERARY DISCUSSIONS

LEVEL 2: THINKING PROCESS

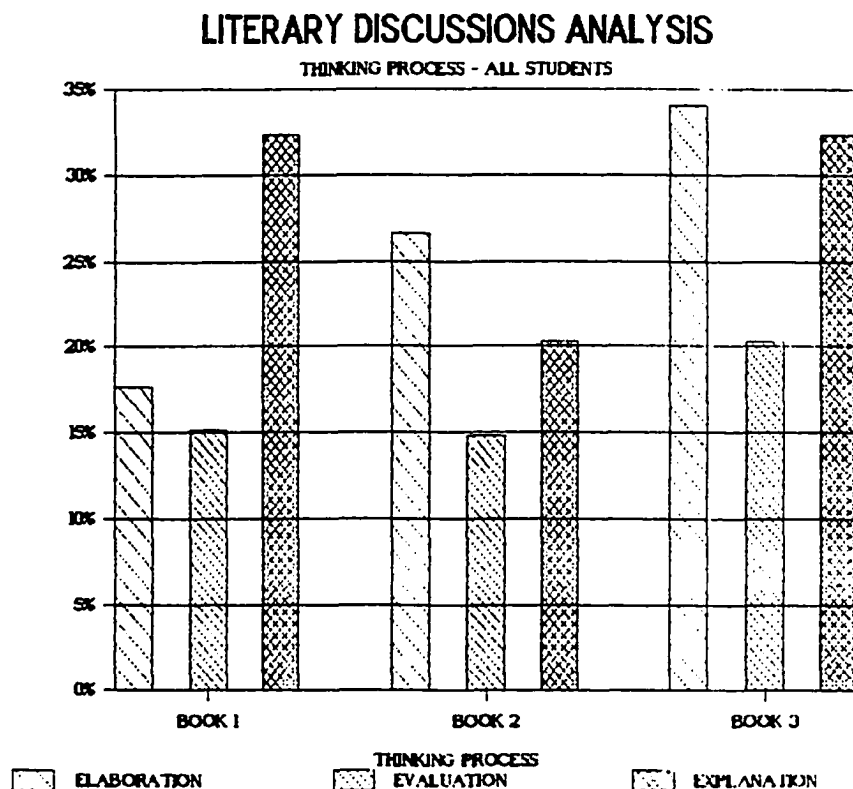
	T E A C H E R								M A L E S T U D E N T S							
	BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL		BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
TP 1	3	1%	2	1%	0	0%	5	1%	11	3%	4	2%	5	2%	20	2%
TP 2	153	48%	76	44%	72	56%	302	49%	65	16%	70	29%	84	31%	219	24%
TP 3	39	12%	21	12%	16	13%	76	12%	62	16%	35	15%	57	21%	154	17%
TP 4	82	26%	59	34%	33	26%	175	28%	177	44%	91	38%	92	34%	361	40%
TP 5	11	3%	5	3%	4	3%	20	3%	30	8%	13	5%	12	4%	55	6%
TP 6	15	5%	7	4%	2	2%	24	4%	44	11%	11	5%	12	4%	67	7%
TP 7	13	4%	3	2%	1	1%	17	3%	11	3%	15	6%	5	2%	31	3%
Turns	316		173		128		617		400		239		267		906	
	F E M A L E S T U D E N T S								S T U D E N T S T O T A L							
	BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL		BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
TP 1	3	3%	0	0%	3	2%	6	2%	14	3%	4	1%	8	2%	26	2%
TP 2	25	23%	20	20%	52	39%	97	29%	90	18%	90	27%	136	34%	317	25%
TP 3	15	14%	15	15%	24	18%	54	16%	77	15%	50	15%	81	20%	209	17%
TP 4	46	42%	45	45%	37	28%	129	38%	223	44%	136	40%	129	32%	490	39%
TP 5	8	7%	11	11%	5	4%	24	7%	38	7%	24	7%	17	4%	79	6%
TP 6	11	10%	5	5%	10	8%	26	8%	55	11%	16	5%	22	6%	93	7%
TP 7	2	2%	3	3%	1	1%	6	2%	13	3%	18	5%	6	2%	37	3%
Turns	110		99		132		341		510		338		399		1,247	

Figure # 5



(Each group of 6 bars represents (from left to right):
 book 1 - males, book 1 - females, book 2 - males, book
 2 - females, book 3 - males and book 3 - females.)

Figure # 5 A



1-Synthesis-- responses which reflect on the topic and don't fit into the other categories (see Figure 5).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

Teacher: When have you been made to do something like Cassie being made to apologize, when have you had something happen like that in your life?

*Terrance: Every day.

Only 1-2% of the responses from both the boys and the girls fell into this category. This indicates that the majority of the students responses had some amount of thinking behind them.

2-Elaboration--continuing and elaborating on another's comment (see Figures 5 & 6).

Charlotte Doyle:

Kevin: I think he looks like one of those people that are in TV and they're dressed up in those yacht club suits.

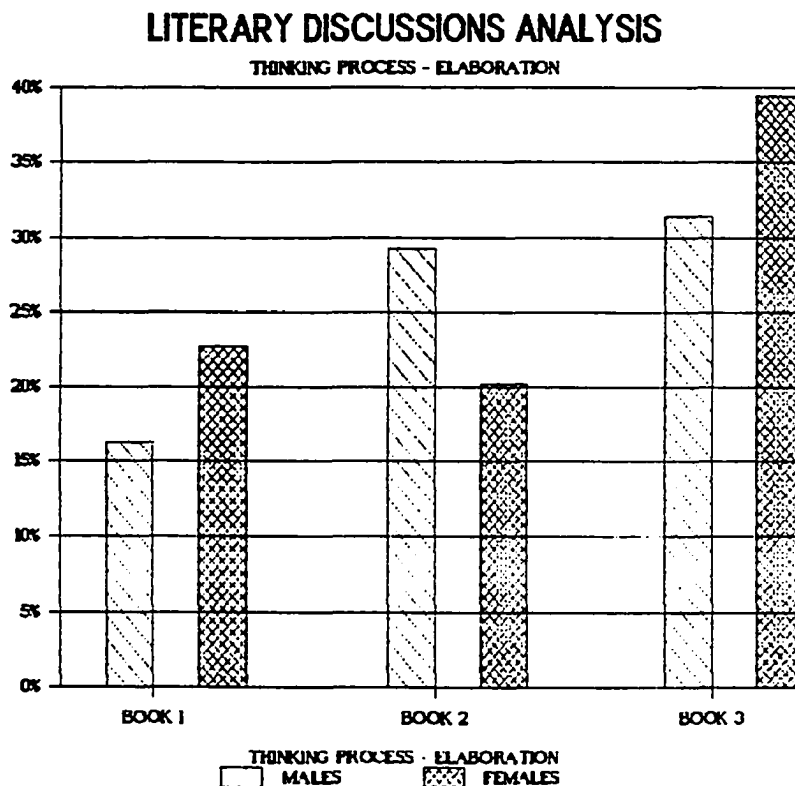
*John: I think he looks like Napoleon in that suit.

Number the Stars:

Teacher: Well I mean if you look at when a President of the United States goes anywhere, they have all the secret service and all that kind of thing; but when the King of Denmark went around, he went around by himself and they said that all of Denmark was his bodyguard.

*John: Because they were around him and they would jump in to save him.

Figure # 6



This showed the second highest type of response within this category. Overall the girls elaborated more than the boys, except for the second book. Girls went from 23%

during the first book to 39% by the third book. This is indicative not only regarding the type of reply that they gave but of the fact that their participation in general was on the rise. The boys also made great strides in elaboration by increasing their percentage output from 16% to 31%.

3-Evaluation--evaluating text or comments by others (see Figures 5 & 7).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

*Kevin: I think I know why John said that he thinks Mr. Grimes was one of the people that were there in the parks. It was because after the bus accident, Mr. Grimes went up and talked to Mr. Granger about something.

Number the Stars:

*John: What I wanted to know was were they going to school through all this happening or did they not? I know that they didn't go to school for a week, but did they keep on not going to school and how long did how many days did this overtake?

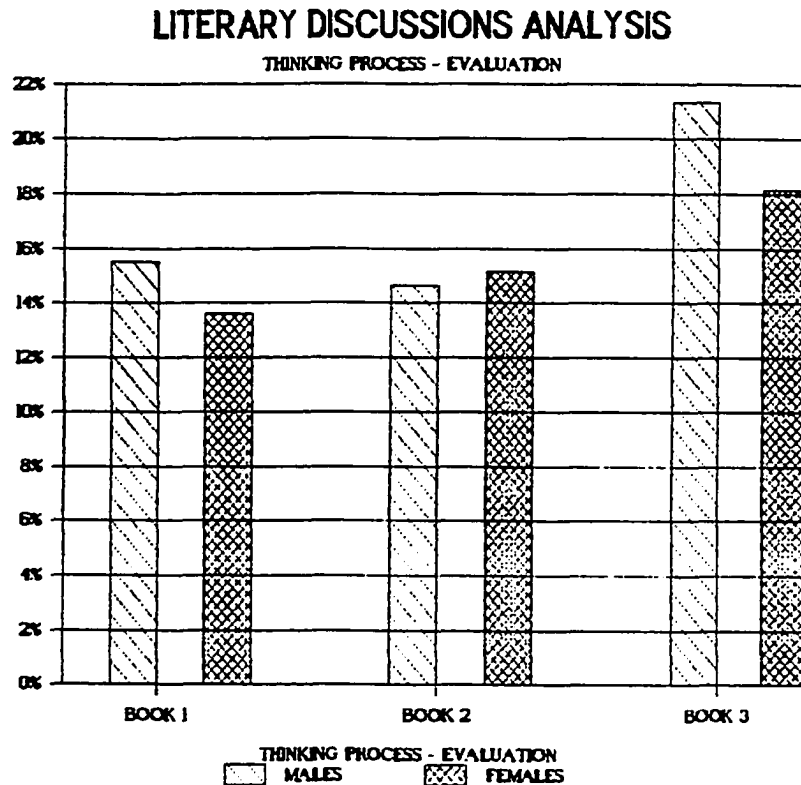
Charlotte Doyle:

Teacher: What do you think of her now so far?
 Boy: She's a daring girl.
 Boy: Very brave.
 * James: I thought she was like a regular girl, but she's tough.

Evaluation was the third most frequent type of response given by the students. The boys increased the amount of evaluative responses (15% to 21%) from book one to book three. The girls increased from 13% to 18% by the third book. There was not much movement in percentages for either boys or girls from the first book to the second book; though

the girls showed a steady upward trend throughout the novels.

Figure # 7



4-Explanation--explaining terms or text or the student's own previous comments (see figures 5 & 8).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

*Kevin: I _____ when RW and Melvin went and told on TJ when they were the ones that hit the Barnetts and the way that all those people came and they were treating _____. I think that was wrong because they were looking for they were only looking for TJ anyways and they went and hurt everybody else.

John: What is Churn?

*Boy: To turn, mixing butter and all that.

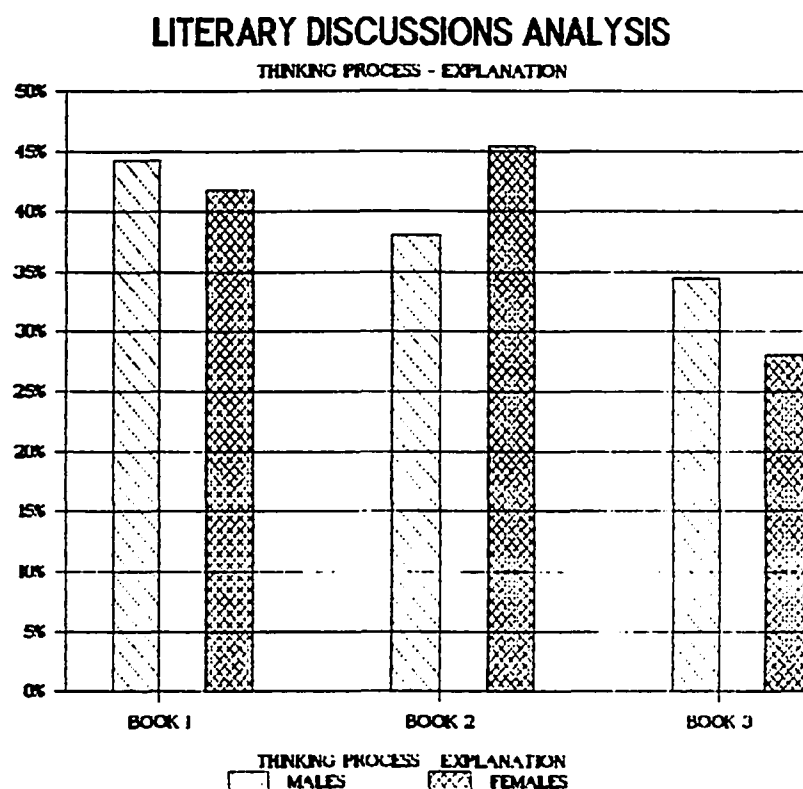
*Kevin: We used to live in Georgia and my mom used to bake some of these, I forgot what it was, but she used to have to like churn everything

together, not mix it up or whip it. It was just churned so you could see the things, but they were mixed up.

Charlotte Doyle:

*Kevin: About what Marisa said before, she read ahead, I think Keech went and told the Captain because he wanted to get back on his good side because Keech was demoted so he wanted to be permanent.

Figure # 8



In analyzing the responses this category shows that the boys spent the most time during the first book explaining themselves and their comments or explaining the text to their group and with each succeeding novel they learned to respond in other ways. They went from 44% during the first book to 38% during the second book and by the third book

they were explaining 34% of the time, showing that they were more able to communicate their responses without explaining them. The girls on the other hand, began in a similar vein with the boys at 42% during the first book. During the second book the girls used their explanation time to teach about the subject of the book and their percentage rose to 46%. The girls had more historical knowledge about the topic of the second book and shared this information with the group. However, by the third book the girls too had dropped to even below that of the boys to 28%.

5-Conclusion--concluding a topic or reaching a conclusion about something within the context of the text (See Figure 5).

Charlotte Doyle:

John: Where did they burn her journal?

Marisa: Oh God, you didn't read it very carefully.
Okay, page 221. On page 221. (READ)

*John: Okay, I got it, whatever.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

Kevin: TJ went by himself.

*John: He went by himself to go get candy _____ dancing and stuff like that, but then he came back and his mom caught him and he said that he was going up to get Claude cause he had gone up there and his mom had told him not to go up there, so _____. He's a liar and he's also a jerk.

The girls and boys concluded almost the same amount during book one, (about 8%) but the boys dropped steadily to about 4% by the third book. The girls however, while they also dropped to about 3% by the third book, spent over 11%

of the time concluding during the second book. They seemed to have more knowledge regarding the material and subject matter and spent more time informing the group of their knowledge, which had a way of ending the discussion on that subject and the discussion then moved on to another area.

6-Interpretation--interpreting text or someone's comment (see Figure 5).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

Teacher: I mean she went, she was upset at her grandmother for not pulling the wagon forward. She was very upset with Big Ma and, do you think they should have warned her and prepared her for this?

Boy: Yah.

Boy: No.

Teacher: No, Why?

Boy: Because, it's gonna happen anyway, so why should they warn her.

*Terrance: I think it's better for her not to know about it. About prejudice. Because then when she has her children, then she'll probably teach them about prejudice and they'll teach prejudice to their children.

The amount of time boys spent interpreting dropped by half after the first book from 11% to 5% and stayed stable through the third book. The girls followed a similar pattern until the third book when they interpreted about 8% of the time.

7-Application--when the student recognizes learning something from the text that can be applied to their own life or within the text itself or something is shared from the student's own life (See Figure 5).

Number the Stars:

Teacher: Marisa had talked about Anne Marie being very brave. Can you talk about how maybe you would be? You know, she was very courageous. Could you picture yourself in that kind of situation and how you would act?

*Kevin: I wouldn't get caught by those soldiers. I would sneak around them. I wouldn't make any noise. I would go quickly.

Charlotte Doyle:

Geoffrey: Well I was thinking that Captain Jaggery might have been like a _____ that was one little tiny mistake but he got kicked out of the pirates because _____.

*Boy: Maybe his life when he was younger was all messed up.

Overall less than 3% of the time was spent, by boys or girls, applying the text or sharing from their lives. The majority of the discussion time was text based, only when the topic was something the children could directly relate to their lives did they make a connection and a response.

Level Three--Sources of Comments: The question here is: Is it text-based, and if yes, what kind; or is it a personal reflection? These selections include: prior knowledge of self, prior knowledge of text, text memory, text topic and text rereading (see Table 3 and Figure 9). The major outcomes from this category for all students together is shown in Figure 9A.

Table # 3

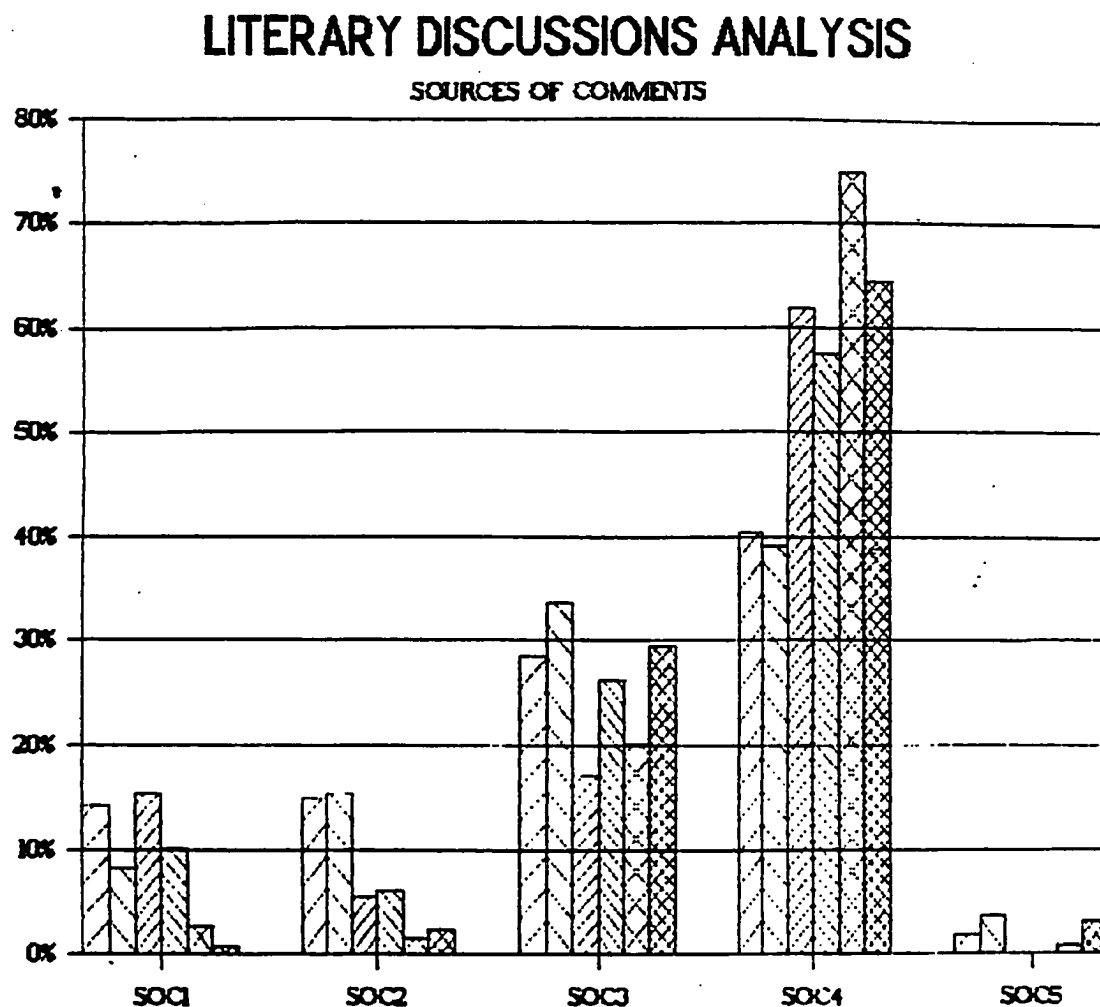
FLOOD AND LAPP'S CODING SYSTEM
FOR ANALYZING LITERARY DISCUSSIONS

LEVEL 3: SOURCES OF COMMENTS

	TEACHER								MALE STUDENTS							
	BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL		BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
SOC 1	32	10%	13	8%	1	1%	46	7%	57	14%	37	15%	7	3%	101	11%
SOC 2	74	23%	8	5%	1	1%	83	13%	60	15%	13	5%	4	1%	77	9%
SOC 3	67	21%	31	18%	13	10%	111	18%	114	29%	41	17%	54	20%	209	23%
SOC 4	134	42%	120	69%	113	88%	368	57%	162	41%	148	62%	200	75%	511	56%
SOC 5	9	3%	1	1%	0	0%	10	2%	7	2%	0	0%	2	1%	9	1%
TURNS	316		173		128		617		400		239		267		906	

	FEMALE STUDENTS								STUDENTS TOTAL							
	BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL		BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
SOC 1	9	8%	10	10%	1	1%	20	6%	66	13%	47	14%	8	2%	121	10%
SOC 2	17	15%	6	6%	3	2%	26	8%	77	15%	19	6%	7	2%	103	8%
SOC 3	37	34%	26	26%	39	30%	103	30%	151	30%	67	20%	93	23%	312	25%
SOC 4	43	39%	57	58%	85	64%	186	55%	205	40%	205	61%	285	71%	697	56%
SOC 5	4	4%	0	0%	4	3%	8	2%	11	2%	0	0%	6	2%	17	1%
TURNS	110		99		132		341		510		338		399		1,247	

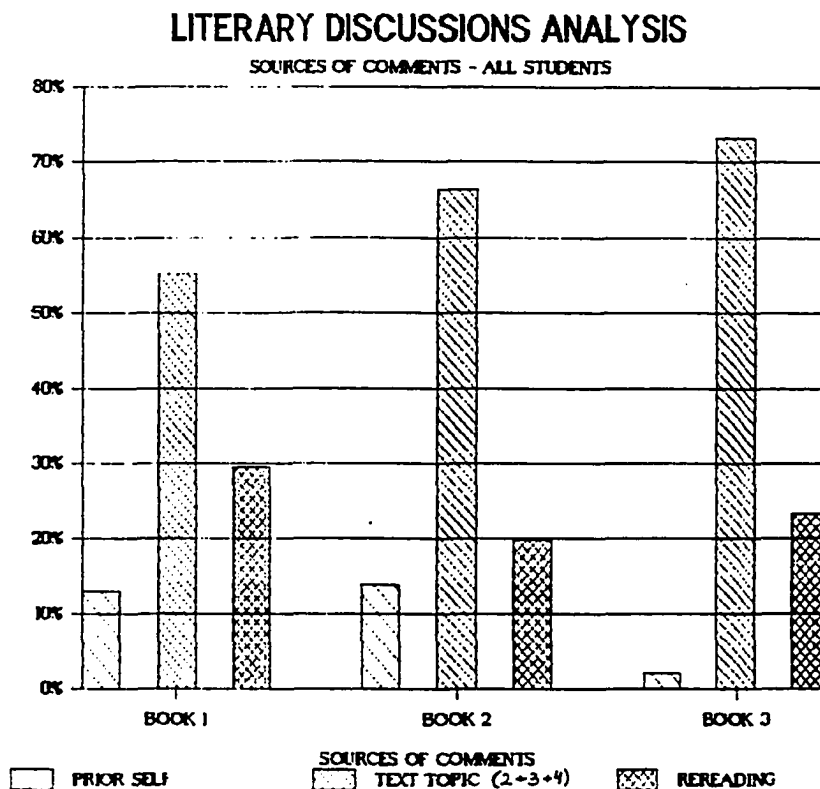
Figure # 9



TYPES OF SOURCES OF COMMENTS BY SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

(Each group of 6 bars represents (from left to right): book 1 - males, book 1 - females, book 2 - males, book 2 - females, book 3 - males and book 3 - females.)

Figure # 9 A

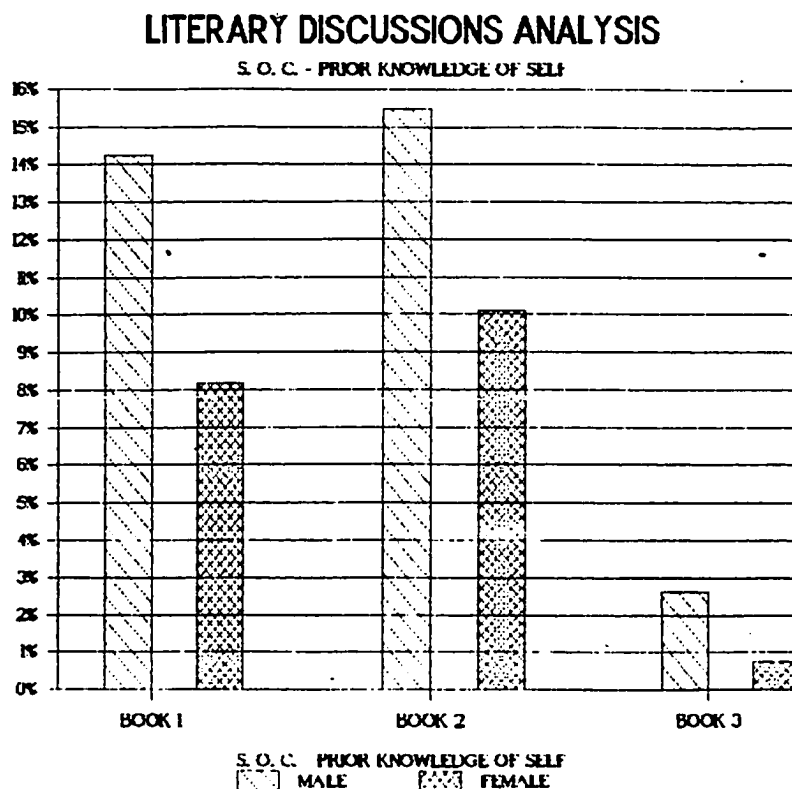


1-Prior Knowledge of Self--this is the determination if the response is of a personal nature (see Figures 9 & 10).

Charlotte Doyle:

*Robbie: This is sort of something that happened to me sort of like Charlotte. She took a fall, well I'll read it. I have taken a fall and trip. I was swinging on a rope way up in the bank, I jumped for the tree and I missed and I dropped ten feet and hit the ground.

Figure # 10



The results could be a reflection on the subject matter of the novels. Whereas, the outcome from the first two books is similar, the results from the third book are substantially different. The children showed that most of their information came directly from the text, and they infrequently utilized personal background information, except when it was directly related to the text or close to their own interests. The first two books dealt with subjects that members of the group could have had some experience with either personally or through the experiences or memories of their parents or grandparents.

The setting of the third novel is on a ship over 160 years ago. The boys were fairly stable at around 15% and the girls increased a small amount (2%) from 8% to 10% during the second novel. However, during the discussion of the third novel the personal responses were limited to just under 3% for the boys and less than 1% for the girls.

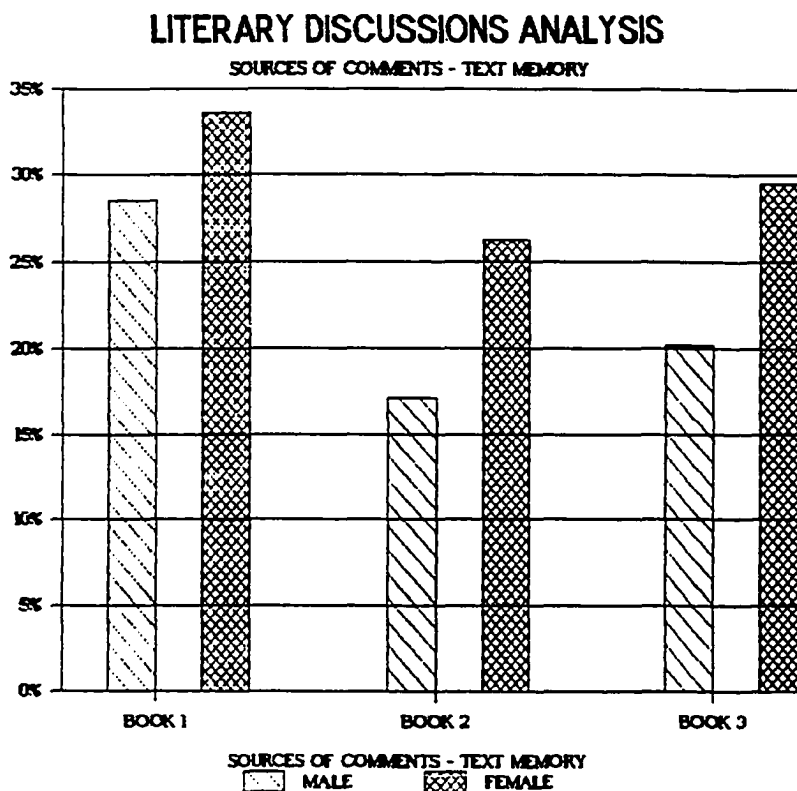
2-Prior Knowledge of Text-- talking about the text - not repeating dialogue but referring to the story and whatever didn't fit into the other areas of analysis. In addition, speaking about other books in relationship to the current topic (see Figure 9).

Number the Stars:

- *Shauna: Chapter 5 really kept me reading. I was worried that Ellen wouldn't get her necklace off. Then I was afraid they would know she was a Rosen. That was smart for Mr. Johansen to take out those pictures. It wasn't really a happy chapter, but I was relieved in the end. Chapter 6 was a really cheerful and uplifting chapter. It seems like they were having fun a little. I got kind of worried with the soldiers, but nothing bad happened.
- *Kevin: Um, about I saw a movie Friday. It was called "Escape from Sobibor. I was partly amazed because I never knew anything like that really happened.

The trend showed the use of this kind of discussion declining with each novel; from about 15% for the first and 2 to 3% by the third. The girls and boys showed very similar use of this category.

Figure # 11



3-Text Memory--relating specific details regarding what happened in the story, sort of just repeating what happened (see Figures 9 & 11).

Number the Stars:

*Marisa: So Anne Marie said when she was like a little girl she was like _____ and she remembers sitting on her father's lap and when he told her about when he remembered the boy he said to the soldier, everybody is the king's bodyguard and she said why and he said because anybody would die for meeting him and her mom because she said that _____.

This was the second most frequent source of comment. The girls did it consistently more than the boys in all three novels. The boys recited text around 28% of the time

for the first novel then dropped to under 20% for the second and remained fairly stable for the third. The girls (one of the girls in particular) relied on this method 34% of the time during the first novel, dropped to 26% during the second book and to 30% by the third book. The percentages reflect this student's continuous use of text memory in her responses.

4-Text Topic--related to the text or subject matter of the text (see Figure 9).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

*Boy: They were going down to the store, I mean not to the store. They went down to Willy's.

Number the Stars:

*Marisa: Well, my Sunday school teacher at temple, he is a survivor of the Holocaust and sometimes he tells us about like stuff that happened to them and he said that when they found out that he was Jewish and they asked him how old he was, he had to lie that he was older than he was because he was only like a teenager. Because if he said his real age then he would have gone straight to the gas chambers. Because then they would have thought he was too young to work and go through all of that and if he hadn't of lied then he would ____.

Charlotte Doyle:

*Marisa: I think she's like really determined and brave because well she used to when she first got on the ship she had to be really proper. Like dresses and bonnets, and flowers and stuff. And now I think because she couldn't stand it when she got home and her parents were like all mad that he burned her journal and everything.

The coded analysis shows that the students' responses were primarily text-based, and that this increased book by

book. As the students became more comfortable participating in discussion groups their comments became less personal and more reflective of the novels and subject matter. The text topic category nearly dominated the entire analysis particularly when combined with Prior Knowledge of Text(2) (see Figure 12). In addition, when categories 2, 3 and 4 are combined, they show that the students were doing little else by the third book (see Figure 13). Both boys and girls increased: the girls from 39% during the first book to nearly 65% by the third. The boys went from 40% during the first book to 75% by the third book.

Figure # 12

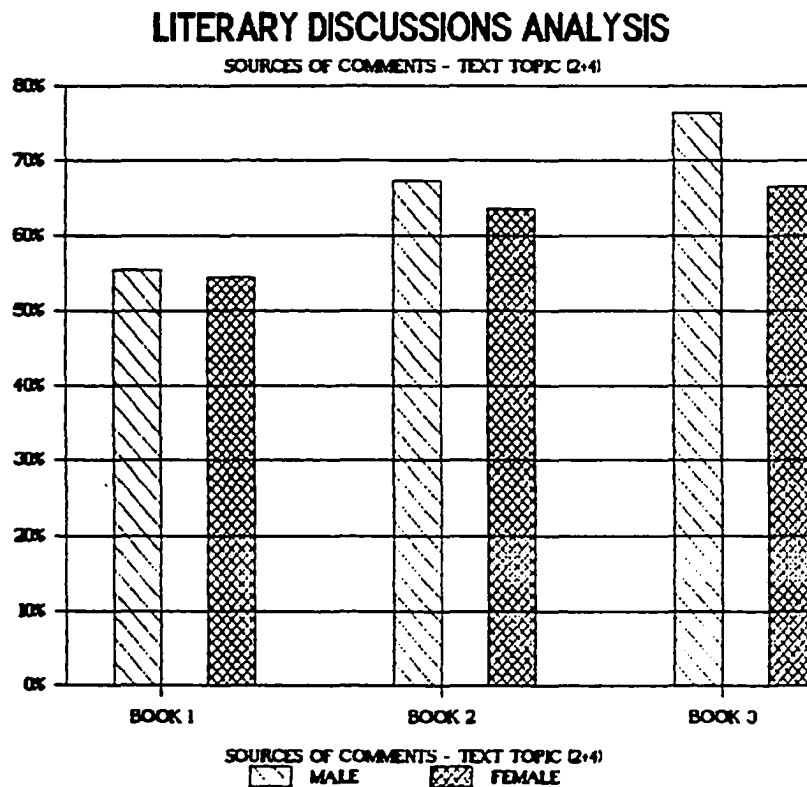
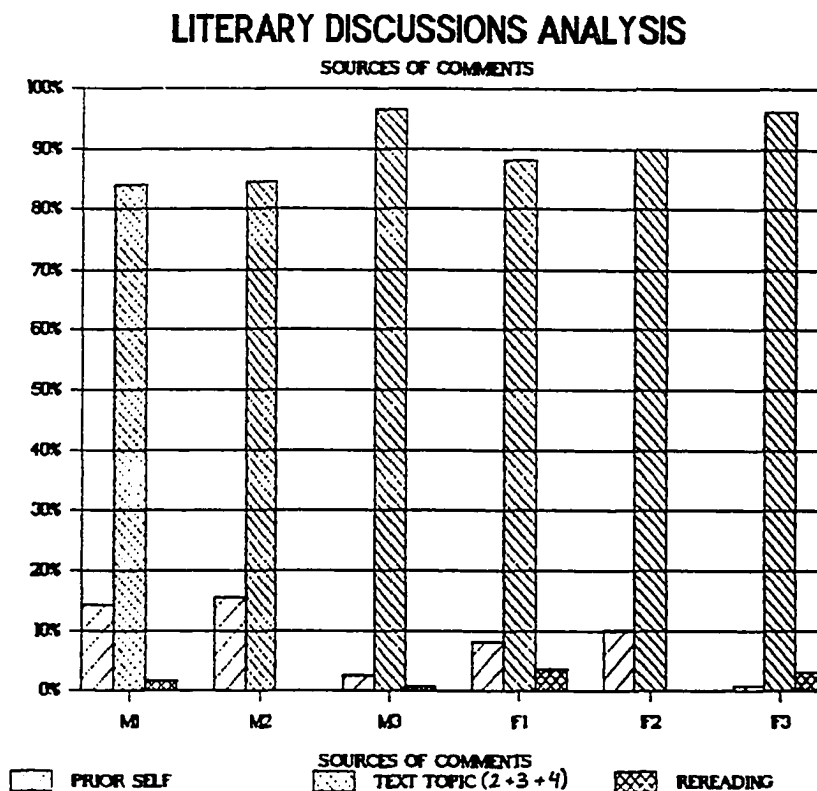


Figure # 13



5-Text Rereading--rereading passages from the text to the group to make a point or for clarification (see Figure 9).

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry:

*John: Alright, I'm gonna read the paragraph. It says on the bottom paragraph, (READ)"....what happened to TJ in the night I did not understand", so he's dead.

Text rereading was the least used source of comments by the students. The most frequent use of this was by the girls to make a point that their viewpoints were correct. The referral to the text occurred towards the latter part of the study, with regard to disputes about the text that students had with each other. The first occurrence of this

was at the very end of the first novel. The use of text rereading never exceeded 3%.

Level Four--Domain-Specific Response:

The next section of the coding system enables the researcher to customize the coding system to analyze specific aspects of the individual study. In this study the issue of women's roles was analyzed and three separate categories were coded: 1) the speaker (Teacher, Boy or Girl), 2) the topic (women's roles), and 3) was it a positive or negative comment about women.

4- Gender--This category was coded as gender but actually the point was to be able to track who was doing the speaking during the discussion groups. Each speaker was assigned a different number: '0'-for the teacher, '1'-for a male student, and '2'- for a female student. The analysis was conducted two ways, for amount of turns that each took and also the length of the turns. In the analysis each time a person spoke was called 'turns' and the length of discussion was termed 'lines'. The lines were determined by an actual typed line in the transcriptions.

Figure # 14

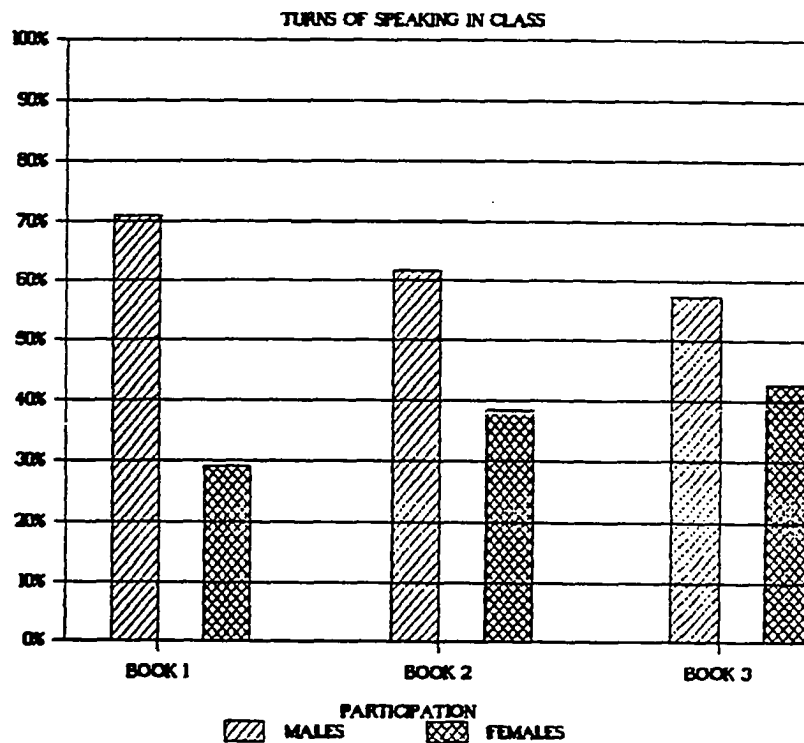
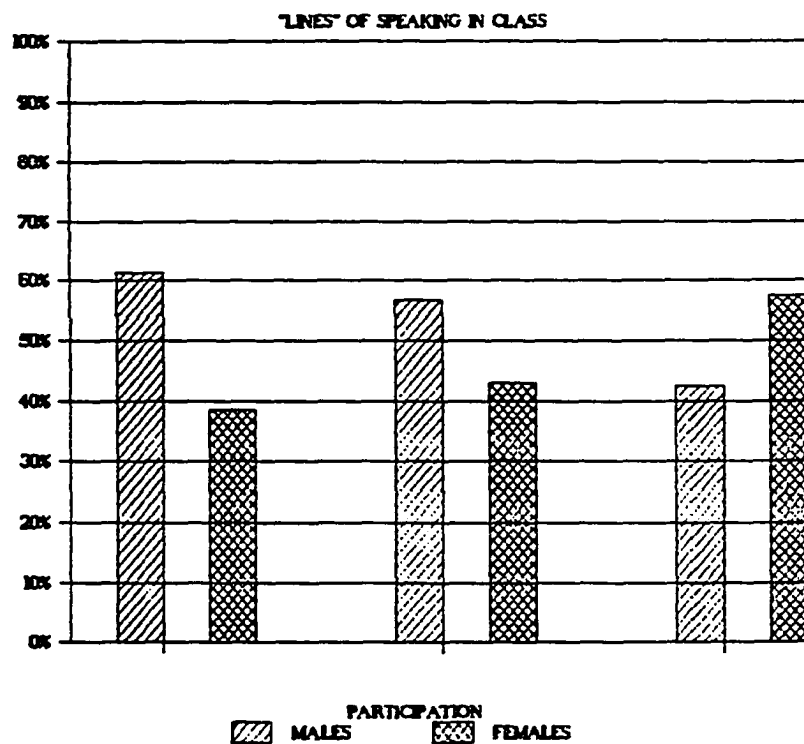
LITERARY DISCUSSIONS ANALYSIS

Figure # 15

LITERARY DISCUSSIONS ANALYSIS

The discussion group which the analysis concentrated on consisted of six boys and four girls. The girls in the class were evenly distributed among the three groups, but there were fewer girls than boys in the class. During the first book the girls took less than half the number of turns (29%) but by the third book they were speaking nearly half the time at 43% (see Figure 14). The girls seemed to take more time to be comfortable with the discussion format and did not talk just to talk. Most of the more flippant remarks were made by the boys which was similar to their behavior in the classroom. What is most interesting is that the quality of the girls discussion by length and substance surpassed that of the boys by the third novel. Their line output at the first book was only 38% to the boys 62% but by the third book the girls contributed 57% of the lines to the boys 43% (see Figure 15). In addition, there might have been four girls in the group, but two were particularly quiet and less involved than the other two girls or the vast majority of the boys. These non-participating members of the group had to be deliberately drawn into the discussion, though one of the girls became significantly more vocal by the third novel.

Figure # 16

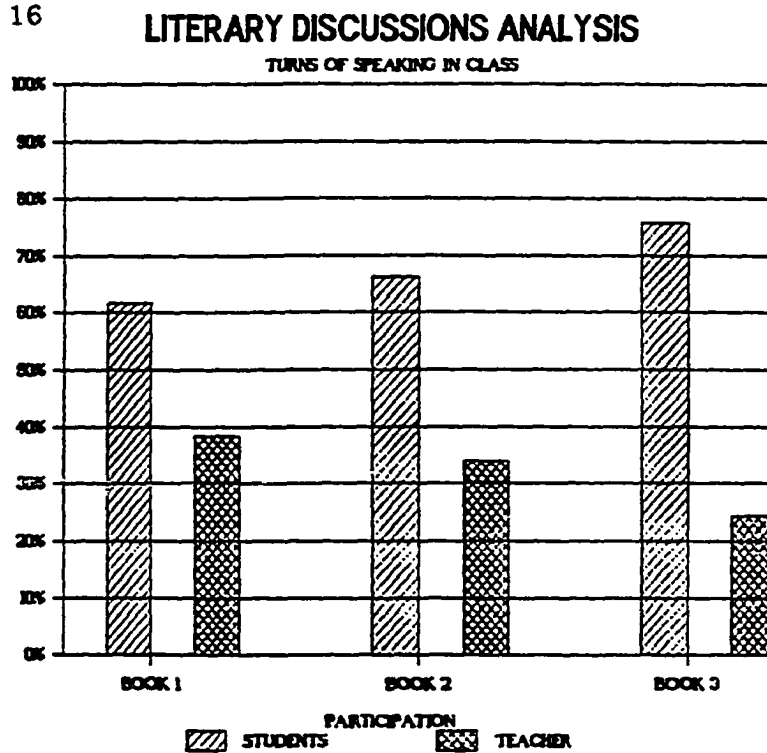
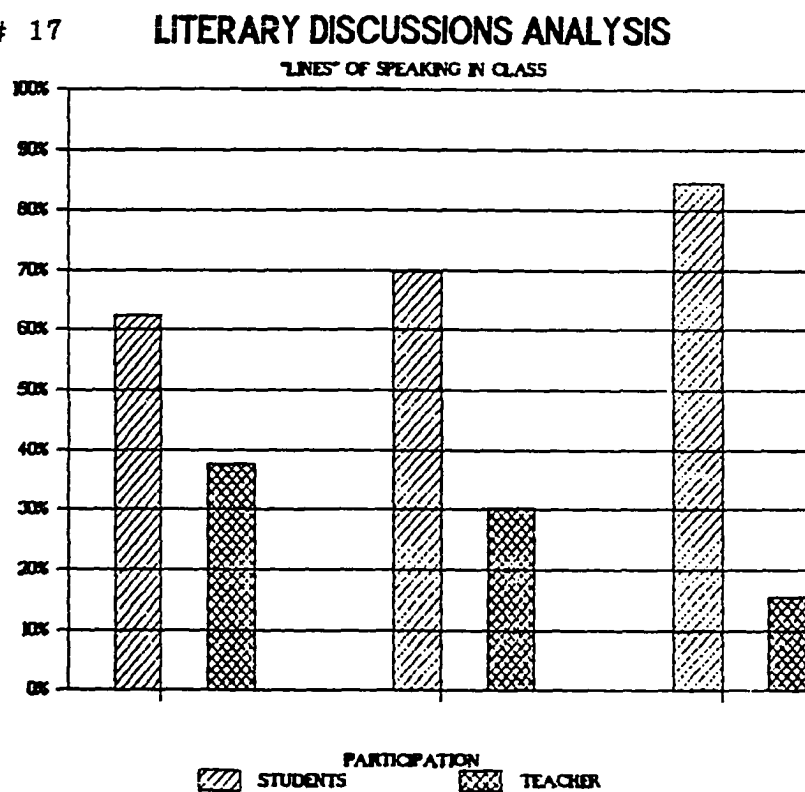


Figure # 17



At times the teacher/researcher literally forced, or somehow put the student on the spot so that they would contribute to the discussion. This seemed to have a positive effect over time and these students began to participate more often.

The teacher's turns from book one to book three was cut by a third from 38% to 24%; but the picture is more dramatic by examining the lines (see Figure 16). The line output by the teacher was cut by more than half from book one at 38% to book three at 16% (see Figure 17). The analysis also shows that during Level one-category five (questions), that the teacher asked more questions by book three which served only to help guide the discussion and less time was spent on instructing the students. As time went on the students needed less direction during the discussion groups and became more comfortable with the discussion format. At times, the students entered the side room already talking about issues from the novels without any prompting from the teacher; it was very exciting. The students seemed to hit their stride by the third novel and literally took over the group which meant the teacher spoke less and less.

5- Mention Women and 6-Positive to Negative--These two categories will be discussed together as they are directly related. If the response mentioned women then it was automatically rated on the five point scale. This scale

went from one which was very negative through five which was very positive; with three being neutral. However, the discussion will primarily focus on whether or not the comments made were positive or negative (see Table 4).

There were 54 out of a total 1864 responses made by the one group over the three books which mentioned women. The discussions of all three groups were examined regarding their comments about women. The number and type of responses were similar in all three groups, indicating that the focus group was a fair representation of the class as a whole. Six of the 54 comments (11%) were made by the teacher. Of the six comments made by the teacher, five of them were either questions (Level one, category five) or directing discussion (Level one, category seven). A breakout was done to see what kinds of answers (Level one, category six) were being given and to whom the response was being directed. The analysis showed that the students' answers were almost evenly distributed between making comments regarding their feelings (mostly during the discussion of the third book), answering questions posed by the teacher and answering questions from other students. The range of the students' responses became more varied by book three and seemed to follow the trends of the study overall. For example, the number of text-based responses (Level three) rose dramatically from book one (18%), book two at 33% doubled the number of text-based responses and by

book three, 90% of the comments were text-based. This trend mirrors the rest of the study.

The students seemed to speak to the issue of women and girls without knowing the focus of this study as only five out of the fifty-four comments were directives from the teacher. The amount of attention given the topic was small during books one and two, only one-third of the combined responses; with two-thirds of the responses given during book three. Possibly the subject matter of the book itself contributed to the increase, or maybe after the short stories and the first two books the children were becoming more aware of the role of the women in the books. Of the seven negative comments all except for one were made by the boys and from a closer look at them they seem to be appropriate to the historical setting of the novel. The comments were mostly regarding Charlotte's change from being ladylike to dirty like the rest of the crew. Overall, the responses that dealt with women, even the unsolicited comments were of a positive nature. The discussions of all three groups were examined regarding the comments about women. The number and type of responses were similar in all three groups indicating that the focus group was a fair representation for the class as a whole.

James: Because man she's messing up. She had a good life, now she got to be a sailor, go places, eat fish all the time probably. Smell nasty, take showers like once a week and be all messed up and then you know if she comes back home she probably be like a boy when she

comes back home. Her parents don't recognize her. They probably kick her out the house.

Four of the negative comments were made by the same individual who was very bothered by the fact that Charlotte became less ladylike. The girls seemed to become progressively more sensitized during the study, even to the point of confronting one of the boys, asking him if he was prejudiced against women. He responded saying it had to do with the historical time period of the novel and not his own feelings.

Table # 4

FLOOD AND LAPP'S CODING SYSTEM
FOR ANALYZING LITERARY DISCUSSIONS

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
	COMMUNI- CATION PROCE- DURES 1 - 10	THINKING PROCESS 1 - 7	SOURCES OF COMMENTS 1 - 5	GENDER 0 - TEACH 1 - M 2 - F	MENTION WOMEN 1 - NO 2 - YES	1-VERY NEG 2-NEGATIVE 3-NEUTRAL 4-POSITIVE 5-VERY POS
TURN						
151	2	4	1	2	2	2
203	5	3	1	1	2	4
210	3	7	3	2	2	3
212	6	7	1	1	2	3
325	3	3	3	2	2	5
329	2	3	3	1	2	4
338	1	3	3	1	2	4
362	7	2	2	0	2	3
653	10	2	1	1	2	2
736	6	4	4	1	2	4
737	2	4	4	1	2	4
957	3	7	4	1	2	4
1171	6	3	2	1	2	4
1218	6	3	2	1	2	5
1219	2	3	2	1	2	3
1222	2	3	4	1	2	3
1288	2	3	3	2	2	5
1392	6	2	4	1	2	3
1434	3	2	4	1	2	3
1459	3	3	3	2	2	4
1461	6	3	4	1	2	2
1463	6	3	4	1	2	4
1465	6	4	4	2	2	3
1480	3	4	4	1	2	3
1484	3	2	4	2	2	3
1485	2	4	4	2	2	3
1486	1	4	4	0	2	3
1491	6	4	4	2	2	3
1553	6	4	3	1	2	3
1554	5	2	4	0	2	3
1555	2	4	4	1	2	3
1556	2	2	4	1	2	3
1557	2	2	4	1	2	3
1558	2	2	4	2	2	4
1559	2	4	3	1	2	3
1641	3	2	4	1	2	4
1642	3	2	4	2	2	4
1643	3	2	4	2	2	4
1645	6	4	3	1	2	3
1766	6	3	4	1	2	4
1767	1	3	4	1	2	5
1768	1	3	4	1	2	4
1769	5	2	4	0	2	3
1770	6	4	4	1	2	3
1771	5	4	4	2	2	3
1772	6	2	4	1	2	3
1829	6	4	4	2	2	4
1837	2	3	4	1	2	2
1838	5	4	4	0	2	3
1839	6	4	4	1	2	2
1840	5	2	4	0	2	3
1841	6	3	4	2	2	3
1842	6	3	4	1	2	2
1847	6	4	4	1	2	2

The second Research Question asked if the reading of books with strong women characters would have an effect on the quantity and quality of the responses students generated in literature discussion groups or in their reader response journals. The above analysis discussed these points and noted the evolving change in the quality and quantity of the students' responses over the three novels. By the time of the third novel the change and frequency of their comments had greatly increased without even knowing the subject of the study, and the reading of these selected novels did generate a greater and a more quality response from the children.

The Reader Response Journals kept by the students added a written dimension to the study and to the understanding of the novels. During the study of the first novel it was obvious that the students were very inexperienced at journal writing and their follow through regarding assignments was relatively poor. In examining the journals from the first book, prior to beginning the second, it was noted that the contents were relatively disappointing; except for a few shining examples. The students primarily listed words that they did not know, without making an attempt to look them up. Only a few students reacted to focus questions; many of the children had a multitude of excuses why they did not write. Following are some of the better examples, in their own words without any corrections, from book one from both

the focus group and others in the class.

Angela: I lurned not to fully trust all your friends. To always do what you fell is right. I lernd that there will awlays be someone trying to put you down.

Geoffrey: I did not really like this chapter because some really racist things happened, like when a white man pushed Stacy around. Well, I sort of had mixed feelings, but I don't know why.

Terrance: When I am in the store near my house the people follow me. And when they start following me I pretend like I put somthing in my pocket so they will get mad.

Shaleah: I predict that TJ is going to get hung. And that Uncle Hammer is going to find out about them not having enough money to pay the rent. And that Papa is going to kill the men with the shotgun. I felt very sad cause at the end cause he went to jail and then hung. I also wish that things could have been better for all the blacks back in those days. Like not getting hung and not going to jail for things that other people did or made him or her do.

Kevin: I think what Mr. Logans said about the fig tree was true. The fig tree represents a black person, and the rest of the trees are white people.

Issa: I think the story of the fig tree had a good moral. It was in a situation just like black people. The big trees were like white people and the fig tree was like a black person. The fig couldn't give in to the big trees around it or it would die.

James: I felt verry said on this chapter, because even though I hated TJ I didn't like what happened to him. I felt like that I wanted to cry, I knew something like this was going to happen like this because I didn't trust Melvin and R.W.. Anyway because I don't think there type will hang around somebody like TJ. When he kicked him in his stomach, and he cough up blood I thought he was going die right then and there. I fell a lot sorry

for TJ I hope he dosen't get in to more trouble then know.

Ambree: I fell good about all the things that Cassie says in the book. She stands up for her rights and what she believes in. Just like in chapter 5 when the man that owned the store said, Who's the little nigger in this? Then Cassie says, I anit nobodys nigger. If I were Cassie I would of said the same thing back. I think Cassis is more like her dad then anyone else. Cassie and her father always stands up for what they believe in and I like that.

As a result of examining the journals before beginning the next novel, it was found that there needed to be a way to make the students more accountable for writing in their journals and that they also needed more direction. Also, when children were absent they often neglected to include catching-up with their journals as part of their assignments. Suggestions which had been discussed previously were reviewed and additional guidelines (from an article in the "Reading Teacher" by Marjorie Hancock) were given which the students were asked to write down in the front of their journals. The students were then asked to choose two points to answer or discuss from the list each time they wrote in their journals plus be accountable for all unknown vocabulary as to improve their understanding of what they have read. At times, the researcher/teacher would ask the students to address certain focus points either in addition to the above or in lieu of them. Many discussion sessions ended with a question or prediction which needed to be answered for the next time. The accountability factor

was very obvious to the researcher by the quality of the participation of the children during the literature discussion groups; but the classroom teacher felt a need to keep more in touch with what was happening and requested the opportunity to review the journals more often. It also became an opportunity for the classroom teacher to learn some new skills in the area of journal writing.

The second novel also brought forth some personal responses, some of which were shared with the discussion group. At times, certain students felt reluctant to share "personal" text from their journals. One interesting conversation involved the burial traditions of the students' families. The students were requested to ask their families and enter the information in their journals and to be prepared to share it the next session. As the group was ethnically diverse, the students gained a lot of knowledge which was received respectfully and was very interesting. The students dealt with many different feelings during this novel, a few examples follow.

Marisa: I thought the last 3 chapters were very good. Now I know that Annemarie and Ellen will be able to see each other again. That makes me happy. I feel bad that Peter had to die. He was such a good person, putting his life at risk for the Jews, he definitely didn't deserve to die.

Terrance: I liked the whole story. It had a happy ending. If I lived in denmark I would be proud.

Shauna: Chapters 1 & 2 were good. They gave the book a good start. I'm glad that the Nazi's let

them go. I want to know what this; O, means. I think that that's sad that Lise died 2 weeks before her wedding. I want to know what kind of accident Lise was in. Kirsti reminded me of a girl in another book I read.

The subjects of the first two books resulted in some personal response but the majority of response even in the journals was text-based. The third novel elicited double the amount of response than the first two books. Even by weight, the journals from the first two novels together were lighter than that of the third book. Possibly the subject matter of the book was more conducive to discussion. But it is the opinion of this researcher that the students were finally feeling comfortable with the requirements of studying a novel. They were more involved with the literature and understood the purpose and utilization of their journals and this was definitely reflected in the quantity and quality of their journals. Following are some short excerpts from their journals of the third book.

Robbie: She is probably lonely on ship of all males. I was lonely when my sister was in girl scouts, I was the only boy there.

Shauna: Chapter 7 was wierd. I was on the edge of my seat when I was reading. I'm glad there was no one there. I wonder if someone is plotting against her. Charlotte, that was scary. I'm glad you're ok. I wonder what's going on.

Angela: I hate the captien he is very mean. I wonder why he picked Zackaraia. Sharh should not have told. Now tow men are dead. Im glad Charlotte hit the captien I don't like him. That was a very sad chapter. I did not like it.

- Marisa: Feelings: I think it was very brave of Charlotte to climb all the way to the royal yard. 123 feet is a long way. She must have really wanted to be part of the crew very badly if she risked her life. I would be extremely scared. Especially when she fell. I was glad she made it in 1 piece.
- John: I liked this book because it showed loyalness. I am glad Charlotte went back to the ship. To her home.
- James: Charlotte is a very different girl. When ever haven to not change for her cloths she dosen't change them I would at least try.
- Autumn: I still hate the captain. He killed Zachariah. Right On Charlotte. Get workin girl become part of that crew. I predict that she will join the crew and regan the crews trust and they will do another rebilion.
- Marline: I think you should have stood up for your rights even if it meant intrupting the captain. I know your scared & I cant tell you not to because your in a scary position right now.

The first Research Question queried whether or not the reading of books with strong women characters would show any difference in the pre and post scores on the Attitudes Towards Women Scale for Adolescents (ATWSA) (see Table 5).

Though the instrument was fairly appropriate for this age group the intervention did not at all address the issues in the survey, though it was thought that the instrument would be a better match before the study. It is very difficult to change people's attitudes about a subject in a short amount of time and even harder if they are unaware of the subject matter of the intervention, as was the case in this study. Four doctoral dissertations mentioned in the

review of the literature chapter including; Corsaro, Martin, Stephenson and Stone; all dealt with the effects of curriculum or literature studies on change of attitudes in some area. In all of their studies the participants were at least aware of the focus of the reading material, perhaps making a difference in the measurable outcomes.

Table # 5

THE A T W S A INSTRUMENT			
GIRLS	PRE- TEST SCORES	POST- TEST SCORES	AFTER- STUDY SCORES
QUESTION 1	3.417	2.929	3.385
QUESTION 2	2.333	2.143	2.000
QUESTION 3	3.500	3.357	3.538
QUESTION 4	3.583	3.571	3.923
QUESTION 5	3.750	3.786	3.692
QUESTION 6	3.500	3.357	3.615
QUESTION 7	3.417	3.643	3.385
QUESTION 8	3.500	3.714	3.308
QUESTION 9	3.500	3.786	3.923
QUESTION 10	3.750	3.714	3.462
QUESTION 11	3.500	3.500	3.615
QUESTION 12	4.000	4.000	4.000
MEAN	41.750	41.500	41.846
STANDARD DIV	3.479	3.458	3.487
VARIANCE	0.382	0.476	0.499
	0.146	0.227	0.249
BOYS	PRE- TEST SCORES	POST- TEST SCORES	AFTER- STUDY SCORES
QUESTION 1	2.938	2.688	3.125
QUESTION 2	2.250	1.875	2.313
QUESTION 3	2.875	3.063	3.063
QUESTION 4	3.000	2.938	3.250
QUESTION 5	2.813	2.500	2.188
QUESTION 6	2.875	3.094	3.250
QUESTION 7	3.688	3.063	3.500
QUESTION 8	3.313	3.063	3.563
QUESTION 9	3.188	3.313	3.438
QUESTION 10	2.875	2.813	3.219
QUESTION 11	3.000	3.125	3.500
QUESTION 12	3.188	3.125	3.313
MEAN	36.000	34.656	37.719
STANDARD DIV	3.000	2.888	3.143
VARIANCE	0.328	0.371	0.427
	0.107	0.138	0.182

All thirty children in the class, not only those in the focus group, were given the pre instrument and asked to fill it out without any introduction or explanation. The girls averaged 3.479 on a scale of 4. This high score indicates a less traditional attitude towards the role of women. The boys averaged 3.0 on the scale of 4. After the reading of the novels the same test was given as a post-test. This researcher is unable to explain a slight drop in both scores, except that possibly the students were more attentive the second time. The girls dropped to 3.458 and the boys to 2.888; neither were significant. One boy remarked that his previous test had very "sexist" answers. The researcher decided to readminister the test after the class had been informed of the focus of the study. The scores of both the boys and the girls went up. The girls' average was 3.487 and the boys' was 3.143. This also was not a significant change. However, the girls started out higher than the boys and remained higher. In addition, the pretest scores were fairly high to begin with and with only a four point scale not much movement could actually occur. Also, one real negative to the scale was that there was no middle ground, one either had to agree or disagree.

An additional instrument was administered only as a post instrument and as an attempt to add to and to corroborate the information received from the first instrument. The Brooks Occupational Survey, revised (See

table 6) had the students identify whether a list of forty-three occupations could be done by men, women or both. A high score of forty-three indicated the most stereotypical rating and the low of zero indicated a non-traditional, more open attitude. The girls averaged 12.417, which is fairly low and the boys were somewhat higher at 14.667. The boys' scores are lower than the scores reported in Diane Stark's dissertation which was completed in 1986, but the girls' scores are similar to those reported in her dissertation. Her results showed the boys at 16.5441. Two possible explanations are that the boys score is a reflection of some strides in occupation equity made in our society in the last seven years or that the literature read for this study did have an impact on them--or both.

Table # 6

THE BROOKS OCCUPATIONAL SURVEY, REVISED
(ONLY 27 STUDENTS TOOK THE TEST)

GIRLS		BOYS	
#	SCORE	#	SCORE
1	0	1	0
2	0	2	0
3	0	3	5
4	3	4	5
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	7
7	20	7	7
8	22	8	12
9	22	9	15
10	22	10	22
11	23	11	23
12	26	12	25
		13	27
		14	30
		15	37
MEAN	12.417	MEAN	14.667
STAND. DIV.	10.316	STAND. DIV.	11.406
VARIANCE	106.410	VARIANCE	130.089
MAXIMUM	26	MAXIMUM	37
MINIMUM	0	MINIMUM	0

The students were asked by the researcher what they thought the focus of the study might be--they did not know. One student did mention that all of the novels had main characters who were female. At that point, after a short discussion, the researcher asked all students in the class to write down their thoughts, at least a paragraph, regarding the focus of the study, reading books with non-stereotyped women as main characters and if it had made any difference to them. The vast majority of the responses were positive. A few samples of their writing follows.

James: It sounds the same as a man being min character. I maybe use to boys being main character in a book but women can do the same thing as man in any story. It really dosent if its a book I will still read it. So for me a woman as the main chacter is fine.

Ambree: I fell that its good that theres books that have girls showing that they can do any job that any other person can do. A long time ago the men probally thought that the women cant do anything but house work. Now women do what they choose to do. Back then only the men could do certin jobs.

Chris: I liked "Charlotte Doyle" the most. I think that girls should be able to do mostly anything boys are allowed to do. I don't agree that girls can do everything boys can do. They can't go in the same bathroom, and boys don't use purses.

Terrance: I think it is a great idea to have books written about strong women. It could let a boy know what a girl is capable of doing or let a girl know that something's are not only for boy's but girl's can do it too. I am sometimes a sexist but I do not really realize it all of the time.

Marisa: I thought that all three of the books were very good, and realistic. In a way, it had

an impression on me. I think girls and boys should be treated equally. I don't think a girl has to be proper or lady-like at all. If a girl wants to be a tom-boy, and play football, I think that is perfectly fine. I think whites and blacks, and people of different religions should be treated equally also. I think people should just be able to be themselves, be who ever they want to be.

The researcher was also interested in finding out if the students had discussed the novels or subject matter at home. A couple of letters had been sent home during the study to inform the parents of the completion of a novel or to ask them to participate in some way, i.e., cooking. At the completion of the third novel the students brought home a final letter asking the parents for their feedback. Only six parents neglected to return the letter. The letters were overwhelmingly positive regarding the study and their children's participation. There were only two comments included within positive letters that were of a negative nature. One comment was that their son thought it was too much work, and the other mentioned that their daughter would have preferred reading the book straight through without having to stop and write in her journal. All of the parents commented that their children were reading much more now and that they appreciated the program. A few of the letters are reprinted here.

"Mrs. Caspi's reading group" has been a highlight for John this year! He's thoroughly enjoyed the reading experience, group discussions and creative projects. As a parent, I've been impressed by and appreciative of the family discussions that

have directly resulted from John's participation in this group. It has exceeded my expectations! We'll miss you.

Shauna was very absorbed and thoughtfully provoked by your program. She shared her notes and I looked forward to reading her responses. She gained great insight and understanding. Although I did not actually read the books I can tell from Shauna's responses that her sense of justice and compassion was inspired. Thank you.

Thank you so much for your time. My son, Roderick, enjoyed reading the novels and was encouraged to do more novel readings. He is able to relate to me the novels he read. Again, thanks a lot.

Your literature class has been great. Rob enjoyed the books. His favorite was Roll of Thunder. He did discuss some of the issues raised with each book (i.e. prejudice, the difficult times faced by the characters etc.) He was impressed by the holocaust survivor who came to speak. I think that having them do a journal during the reading helped them keep in focus the story line and their reaction to it.

Brianda did enjoy the books she read. She discuss some chapters of the novels with me that were interesting. I want to thank you for all you're work with the children.

CHAPTER 5

Summary and Conclusions

Summary of Study and Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate if the reading of selected literature with strong, non-stereotyped women characters would affect the sex stereotypes and attitudes of the children and the children's participation in literature discussion groups. The literature discussion groups and written response journals were utilized as major vehicles for studying the literature.

Permission was obtained to conduct the study in a sixth grade classroom. The school was racially and ethnically mixed as a result of the Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment (VEEP) and Magnet busing programs. The teacher had previously divided the class into three sections for language arts, all sections were representative of the class as a whole. The entire class participated in the study though the output of one group became the focus of the findings for the study. The fact that this class was so diverse will allow the findings to be more applicable to other situations.

Three short stories and three novels were chosen for the study on the basis of having a strong female main character and not having an opposing weak male character, and also additional criteria which is described in the methodology chapter. The short stories were used on a whole class basis, without breaking into small groups. This

helped the researcher to evaluate the overall reading skills of the class and to serve as an introduction for the children of how to proceed in the literature discussion groups. The children were asked to read the stories, some parts aloud and others silently and then to react to the content of the short stories.

The novels chosen for the study were: Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, Number the Stars, and The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle. The students were never informed about the focus of the study until it was concluded. The students were given the opportunity to learn about the background and the history of the times in which the novels were written and activities were planned to enhance their understanding of the novels themselves. Each student was required to participate in the discussion group, keep a journal for each book, and present a culminating activity/final project to the class. The children had little previous experience in participating in discussion groups or journal writing so the study would provide the opportunity to add to and enhance their skills in these areas. The study of the novels was augmented by sharing the food and holidays described in the novels, watching videos about the topics, and hearing a speaker who actually lived through some of the experiences depicted in one of the stories.

Flood and Lapp's Coding System for Analyzing Literary Discussions was utilized to help interpret the transcriptions from the discussion groups. Each statement or response from the children or researcher was analyzed in six different ways. The observations of this researcher during a period before the onset of the study was that it was always the same children and mostly the teacher doing the talking while the remainder of the class sat quietly. One of the goals of this study was that a majority of the children would become engaged in the literature rather than a minority of those who have traditionally always participated.

The analysis showed that many changes occurred from the first novel through the completion of the third novel. The results reflected that the students' responses became more varied by the third novel as seen by the examination of the group's responses in Level one-the communication procedures. The girls were slower to participate during the first book but by the third book, as shown in the examination of the findings in level four, and even though they numbered less than the boys, they were participating at the same rate and beginning to surpass the boys. With the exception of one girl in a group other than the focus group, the girls on the whole were quieter than the boys in class, so the gains of their participation in the discussion groups became very noticeable. This year's study by the American Association

of University Women reported that teachers consistently pay more attention to the boys in the class. It could be the case that this results in girls being hesitant to speak out in class and engage in discussion without first being assured that they are correct in what they have to say and so they defer to the boys until that time. It was also interesting that the analysis of the lines of the transcriptions showed that the girls surpassed the boys in the length and substance of their responses by the third book; this demonstrated the added impact of their participation. The boys spent a lot of the first book explaining themselves and their responses but by the third book they too were responding in more varied ways. This finding from level two analyzing the thinking process, indicates that the boys became more adept at expressing their thoughts and in the art of discussion. Both the girls and the boys learned to maintain the discussion and to expand on their thoughts as the study progressed, as shown in level one, communication procedures; though the girls began maintaining at a higher level and continued to do so. From the outset the girls continued to respond on the topic at hand without constantly changing the subject and this added to the substance and quality of the discussion. What the children did with their responses is important. In order to have a real discussion, it takes more than just having the children answering questions asked by the

teacher. The fact that the children continued to discuss the topic; as the findings indicated in level one, communication procedures; is significant in the development of the level of a discussion. The girls also elaborated more on the topics than the boys but both made great strides in elaboration demonstrated by the analysis of the thinking process in level two. The students' answers became more complex as the study progressed from novel to novel and their answers to questions became less simple; which strongly suggests engagement in the subject and the literature.

Both the girls and the boys spent little time applying the books to their own lives or sharing incidents from them. The majority of the discussion was based upon the text as shown in level three, the sources of comments. Only when the topic at hand was directly related to something in their lives did they connect their discussion to it. The subject matter of the individual texts added greatly to the tenor of the discussions. As Louise Rosenblatt said in Literature as Exploration, the teacher cannot avoid discussing the ethical issues and the actions of the characters in the texts. This researcher made a great effort to make the atmosphere as comfortable as possible, because the topics and even the vocabulary were sometimes of a very sensitive nature.

As the study progressed more of the students participated more often and at greater length. The

analysis of turns by students and researcher, level four, the recording of who was doing the speaking, showed about a fifteen per cent increase in student participation by the third book. However, the analysis of the lines, or length of time they spoke, showed a more impressive picture as the students were speaking nearly 85% of the time by the third novel as opposed to just over 60 % during the first book. A few of the students seemed to always require some prompting or appeal to respond from the researcher. The participation by the researcher greatly decreased by the third novel, the findings showed a drop from 38 % to 24 %. In many class situations the teacher spends a majority of time talking and the students listening. In this study the researcher spoke less and less during each book, as the students began to take over the direction of the discussion group. This sharing the leadership of the discussion group was commented upon in an article by Eeds and Peterson. They termed the teacher's role as being a "literary leader" (Eeds and Peterson, 1991, p. 119) rather than one whose "interpretations are mandated" (p. 119). Many teachers find it difficult to share the helm, as they might feel their authority becoming challenged or limited. However, the researcher/teacher was still needed to help begin and guide the discussion, mostly by questions, helping with interpretation and to keep a respectful tone with regard to students' interactions with each other.

Even though the students were unaware of the theme regarding stereotypes and occupational attitudes regarding women, their responses about girls or women increased book by book, as shown in the analysis of level five, even without knowledge of the topic. The majority of the comments about women were made during the third book and most of the responses were very positive. The transcripts for all three of the groups were examined for their comments regarding women and the focus group was found to be representative of the class. The fact that the main characters of the stories were women did function to promote responses about these characters, though the discussions were not guided in such a manner as to focus on women in general. However, the discussion that did take place regarding the theme of the study most likely did help to sensitize and make the children more aware of issues of equity, though not necessarily only about women but other minorities and injustices as well. During the discussion groups of Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry and Number the Stars a few students related their observations about being a member of a minority group on a couple of occasions and further discussion ensued from their experiences which this researcher felt made an impact on the students.

The second Research Question was shown to have a positive effect due to the impact that the novels had on the quality and the quantity of the participation and responses

exhibited in the discussion groups and in their reader response journals.

The development of the journals was similar to that of the discussion groups. The children, except for a few, seemed to be slow starters and needed more guidance than originally expected. After the completion of the first novel, more explicit instructions and requirements were given which made a noticeable difference in the amount of output. By the third book the students writing increased tremendously and became a significant addition to the quality of the discussions. Similar to the analysis of the discussion groups, the journals showed adherence to the text with less personal response than anticipated. However, there was more personal response in the journals than in the discussion groups. A few students were reluctant to share the more personal writings with the group without a great deal of encouragement from the researcher. However, most students felt very comfortable and even enthusiastic about sharing their journals with their fellow classmates and sometimes were impatient about waiting their turn. The journals added a great deal to the discussion groups even though the utilization of their journals was an added learning experience for the children as it took them a while to become proficient in their use. The journals provided a point of departure for the discussion groups and also helped to focus the students' comments. By having the

children be responsible for daily contributions, whether by choosing the areas in which they wrote or researcher-directed questions, it provided them with certain goals when reading. It seemed to increase their memories while reading and they did not arrive at the discussion groups saying "I don't remember".

The students were given The Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents as both a pre and post instrument. The first Research Question asked if the reading of books with strong women characters would show any difference in the pre and post scores. The students began with relatively high scores which indicated a more open attitude regarding women and the four point scale made it more difficult to measure change. Though a post-post test given after the children were informed of the topic of the study did show a slight upward trend. Even though much effort was made to find an instrument that could be utilized for this study it may be that this instrument was inappropriate. None of the issues in the questionnaire were addressed during the novel study intervention. As was stated by Jean-Procope Martin in his 1980 dissertation, he questioned "the efficacy of using an instrument requiring agreement or disagreement responses to a set of questions which have been weighted to measure attitudes. For this particular age group...the results have not shown positive change" (p.45). Also, it may be that it is difficult to change attitudes

within the relatively short period of time that this study was conducted.

The students were also given The Brooks Occupational Survey, revised as a post instrument. The lower the score (out of a possible forty-three) the less one was traditional and stereotyped regarding occupational choices. The girls' mean score was fairly low at 12, but consistent with girls' scores in Diane Stark's 1986 dissertation of 12.5. However, the boys' mean score of 14 was a couple of points lower than that for the boys in Stark's study at 16.5. This could indicate that some inroads have been made in our society regarding occupational equity for women or that the boys did gain new knowledge from this study.

Another facet of post-study information came from the students being asked to write a short piece after having been informed of the study's focus. The student's responses, especially the boys, only served to confirm the studies of Nilsen, Carlson and others; that boys will read books with girls as the main characters if they have positive and active roles and are not boring. In their reactions to being informed about the theme of this study the boys said that reading books with female leads was acceptable if the books were interesting and action-packed.

The girls definitely enjoyed having female main characters and felt that both sexes should be treated equally. However, after having taken stock of the offerings

of the school library (there was no classroom library) it would be difficult for the children to find many books with girls or women as main characters or non-sexist choices. The school librarian was asked how she selected new and additional books for the library. Her response demonstrated that almost no change has occurred since Lenore Weitzman's study in 1972. The librarian uses her limited financial resources to replace tattered or missing books and orders new books mostly from the Caldecott award list. She did add that she sometimes also used the California Reader List, and the Coretta Scott King list, and that the school district recommends books. She is aware of book reviews and occasionally peruses the offerings at the local children's book stores. Unfortunately not even all of the library's limited funds are used to buy books, but also library supplies, magazines and prizes for the reading program. The librarian admitted that she did not take into consideration whether or not a book showed female stereotypes, only books that she felt the children would read. Out of all the biographies in the library collection, and there were at least a few hundred, only thirty were about women. Of the thirty, only a few were of contemporary women. It was also noticed that the collection of books in the library was very dated, it is possible that many of them have been donated over the years. The newer books were of the most popular on the market, and as expected from the Caldecott and Newbery

award lists.

The parental response to a letter sent home at the end of the study asking for feedback was very positive. The parents said that the students discussed the books with their families and that they seemed to enjoy reading more and that they were reading more as a result of the program. The parents also indicated that they were pleased with the design of the program. as they voiced their dissatisfaction with and ridiculed the regular approach to book reports. Twenty-six out the thirty parents responded and only two mentioned anything at all negative and even those two letters were very positive and complimentary. Many parents said that the study had been the highlight of the year for their child and that they appreciated that their children had been able to participate.

Conclusions

The impetus of this study was to determine if books with strong women characters would have some influence in making preadolescent girls more aware of the related issues and the elimination of stereotyping of women. However, it is extremely important that boys understand and support the equity issues as well. It did make a difference to the quality of the discussion groups that the main characters were non-stereotypical women. The girls in the class felt

that they could identify with the characters, their participation increased in the discussion groups and they became involved in the literature and the issues. Their responses after knowing the topic of the study were not only positive but enthusiastic and very supportive about reading books with non-stereotyped women and having the boys do so as well. The boys, as a result of the selection of literature, were not reluctant to read the stories, they became involved with them and also became more aware of the issues. Other studies, such as that by Rose Corsaro in 1987, have shown that boys are less affected by women's studies curriculum than the girls. But if the message of reading books with only male main characters is that women don't count, then these curriculums and efforts for equity are required and necessary for change. Books have a considerable impact on children and care should always be taken in their selection by teachers and parents. Books can be put into historical perspective, but that is no excuse for always choosing books that are sexist. Unfortunately, as pointed out by Mary Jacquart in her 1988 dissertation, "children's literature has not kept up with the sex equity issue" (p. 69). Her attempt to locate good literature in 1988 was as difficult as mine in 1993. Many of the non-sexist books that had been published in the earlier 1970's are out-of-print and not enough has been written or published to replace them. The concentration seems to have

shifted to being multicultural, though not always non-sexist multicultural, as many cultures are highly sexist. Publishers need to make a better effort to ensure that their new offerings include stories and illustrations that exhibit non-sexist roles so that they are available to teachers and parents to share with and to recommend to their children.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

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Institute of Child Development
College of Education*

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September 22, 1992

**Ms. Leslie Caspi
5903 Overlake Avenue.
San Diego, CA 92120**

Dear Ms. Caspi:

I am enclosing a copy of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents (AWSA) and a copy of the Galambos, Petersen, Richards, & Gitelson article that appeared in Sex Roles in 1985. Referring to your question pertaining to the replaced item: If you check paragraph 2 on page 349 and pay special note to the footnote, the original item #3 was "Special attentions to women are old-fashioned and should be stopped." That item was replaced with "On the average, girls are as smart as boys."

Please let us know if you decide to use the instrument; we would also very much appreciate hearing of your results. If I can be of any further help to you, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

**Nancy Leffert, Ph.D.
Director of Research**

APPENDIX B

Attitudes Scale

Below are 12 statements in which you are asked to express your feelings by indicating whether you (A) agree strongly, (B) agree mildly, (C) disagree mildly, or (D) disagree strongly with the statement. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. Please indicate your opinion by circling the letter next to the statement which best describes your personal attitude. Please respond to every item.

	Agree strongly	Agree mildly	Disagree mildly	Disagree strongly
1. Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy.	A	B	C	D
2. On a date, the boy should be expected to pay all expenses.	A	B	C	D
3. On the average, girls are as smart as boys.	A	B	C	D
4. More encouragement in a family should be given to sons than daughters to go to college.	A	B	C	D
5. It is all right for a girl to want to play rough sports like football.	A	B	C	D
6. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making family decisions.	A	B	C	D
7. It is all right for a girl to ask a boy out on a date.	A	B	C	D
8. It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school.	A	B	C	D
9. If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.	A	B	C	D
10. Boys are better leaders than girls.	A	B	C	D
11. Girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers than desiring a professional or business career.	A	B	C	D
12. Girls should have the same freedoms as boys.	A	B	C	D

APPENDIX C

This is NOT a test. There are no right or wrong answers.

This survey is intended to find out what you think about jobs for men and women. Thank you for your help!

Check one:

Grade _____

BOY _____

GIRL _____

When you finish school, what job would you LIKE to have?

When you finish school, what job do you REALLY THINK that you will have?

What job does your father have?

What job does your mother have?

Directions: On each line--

Circle who CAN do the job - you may choose either one, or both.

EXAMPLE

COSMETICS DEMONSTRATOR - shows people how to care for their skin.

MAN

WOMAN

C

1) AIRLINE FLIGHT ATTENDANT - serves food and makes people comfortable on an airplane.	MAN	WOMAN
2) ARCHITECT - designs houses, schools and other buildings.	MAN	WOMAN
3) AUTOMOBILE MECHANIC - fixes car engines and car bodies.	MAN	WOMAN
4) AUTOMOBILE SALESPERSON - sells new and used cars.	MAN	WOMAN
5) BAGGAGE HANDLER - loads suitcases onto and off of airplanes.	MAN	WOMAN
6) BANK MANAGER - boss of all the people who work in the bank.	MAN	WOMAN
7) BILL COLLECTOR - collects money from people who have not paid their bills.	MAN	WOMAN
8) BOOKKEEPER - keeps a record of all the money that a business makes and spends.	MAN	WOMAN
9) BUTCHER - cuts meat into pieces to be sold in stores.	MAN	WOMAN
10) CARPENTER - builds houses of wood and makes cabinets.	MAN	WOMAN
11) DANCING INSTRUCTOR - teaches people how to dance.	MAN	WOMAN
12) DENTIST - fixes teeth and pulls bad teeth.	MAN	WOMAN
13) DIETITIAN - plans the meals in hospitals, schools and other places.	MAN	WOMAN
14) DOCTOR - treats sick people and helps them become well.	MAN	WOMAN
15) FARMER - grows fruit or vegetables or raises animals to sell.	MAN	WOMAN
16) FILE CLERK - sorts letters and other papers and puts them in order into file cabinets and drawers.	MAN	WOMAN
17) GROCERY CASHIER - rings up food purchases on a cash register and takes money and makes change for shoppers.	MAN	WOMAN
18) HAIRDRESSER - washes, sets, combs and styles hair.	MAN	WOMAN

C

19) HOSPITAL ATTENDANT - helps the nurse with the patients in a hospital.	MAN	WOMAN
20) HOUSE PAINTER - paints both the inside and outside of houses.	MAN	WOMAN
21) JEWELER - makes and fixes broken jewelery.	MAN	WOMAN
22) LAWYER - helps people in court face a judge.	MAN	WOMAN
23) LIBRARIAN - takes care of the books in a library and helps people find books.	MAN	WOMAN
24) MACHINIST - sets up and runs machine tools in a factory.	MAN	WOMAN
25) MAIL CARRIER - delivers mail to homes, schools, and businesses.	MAN	WOMAN
26) NURSE - helps the doctor to take care of sick people.	MAN	WOMAN
27) NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHER - takes care of very young children, playing and singing with them.	MAN	WOMAN
28) PHARMACIST - fills prescriptions from a doctor for medicine for people.	MAN	WOMAN
29) PIANO TUNER - fixes pianos so that they sound good.	MAN	WOMAN
30) PILOT - flies airplanes.	MAN	WOMAN
31) PRINCIPAL - is in charge of all students, teachers, and other workers in a school.	MAN	WOMAN
32) PRIVATE DETECTIVE - investigates crimes and looks for missing people.	MAN	WOMAN
33) RECEPTIONIST - greets people who come into an office, writes their name down for the boss and answers the telephone.	MAN	WOMAN

34) SALES CLERK - sells things in a store.	MAN	WOMAN
35) SECRETARY- helps the boss by answering the telephone, reading the mail and typing letters.	MAN	WOMAN
36) SEWING MACHINE OPERATOR - uses a sewing machine to sew clothing in a factory.	MAN	WOMAN
37) STENOGRAPHER - writes words in shorthand for a boss, then types letters from shorthand notes.	MAN	WOMAN
38) SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS - the person in charge of all of the students, teachers, and workers in all of the schools in a school district.	MAN	WOMAN
39) TAILOR - designs and sews suits and coats.	MAN	WOMAN
40) TEACHER - helps boys and girls to learn while in school.	MAN	WOMAN
41) TELEPHONE OPERATOR - connects the telephone call for people.	MAN	WOMAN
42) TRUCK DRIVER - drives a truck.	MAN	WOMAN
43) TYPIST - uses a typewriter to type letters, reports and stencils.	MAN	WOMAN

APPENDIX D

February 1, 1993

Dear Parents,

With the approval of ~~S. [redacted]~~ and ~~[redacted]~~, I will be working with the children of Room ~~45~~.

I am a doctoral candidate in education at The University of San Diego. I am a California State certified teacher of K-12 and I have a master's degree in reading and a reading specialist credential. I am in the process of writing my dissertation. The topic of the dissertation is the influence of literature on children.

The children in ~~S. [redacted]~~ class will have the opportunity to participate in my study. The children will read short stories and novels which are part of the approved core list of the State of California. The activities which the students will participate in will not differ from the normal classroom routine. The children will be asked to fill out a one page questionnaire related to the subject of the study before and after reading the stories and novels.

I hope that your children will enjoy reading the novels and stories and fully participate in all the planned activities. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me through the school office. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Leslie Caspi

Approved:

principal

teacher

APPENDIX E

March 2, 1993

Dear Parents,

The class has completed the reading of the novel, Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry.

This Thursday at 10:00 we would like to spend the hour celebrating the completion of the novel by tasting foods that were eaten in the South and hopefully speaking to someone who was raised in the South. Possibly some of you can help in both these areas.

If any of you were raised in the South and would be willing to come speak to the class it would be greatly appreciated. The issues covered in the book are still relevant to today and this would only help to give the children a richer background. Please sign up to do so, more than one parent or friend is welcomed.

In addition, we need parents to send in samples of food served in the South, or even today; such as: black-eyed peas, chitlins, egg-custard pies, sweet potato pie, corn bread, beans, succotash, puddings, hominy, grits, breads, fritters etc...Don't worry if your children make fun of whatever the food might be, we'll all benefit by the experience of tasting it.

The children's final projects for Roll of Thunder are due this Friday. We will be starting a new novel next week. I hope your children have enjoyed participating so far. I have enjoyed working with them--they're great!

Thank you for your cooperation. I would appreciate your filling out the signups below and if you have any comments or feedback for me include that as well.

Sincerely,

Leslie Caspi

---I am willing to speak to the class- _____
Name

---I am sending in _____ on Thursday.
Name of Food

Any Comments:

6

April 15, 1993

Dear Parents,

The class has completed reading and discussing the three novels selected for the study. The novels were: Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry, Number the Stars, and The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle. Their final project for Charlotte Doyle is due this coming Tuesday. On Monday I will discuss with the class the reasons and implications of the study.

At this time I would like your participation. I would like your comments and feedback regarding the time I have spent with the class. (i.e.: did your child enjoy the books, did your child discuss the books at home, their reactions regarding the subject matter, and so on.) It may be that your child did not share their experiences with you--I would appreciate knowing that as well. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

I have greatly enjoyed working with the children and I wish them the best in the future. I would like to thank ~~_____~~ for allowing me the privilege of working with her class. I hope that reading and interacting with these novels has added to their knowledge and enjoyment of literature.

Sincerely,

Leslie Caspi

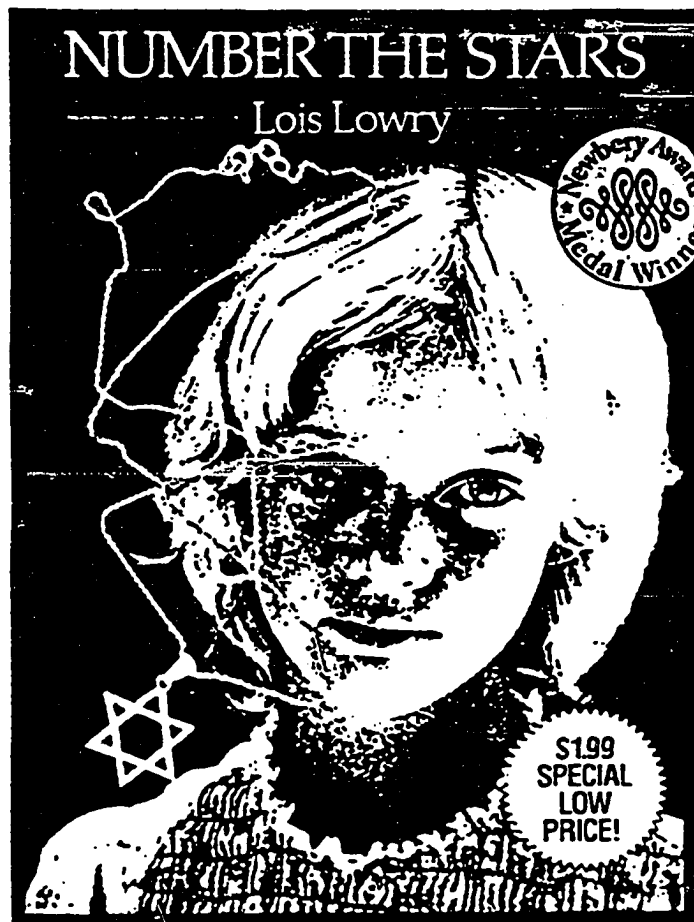
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APPENDIX F

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry

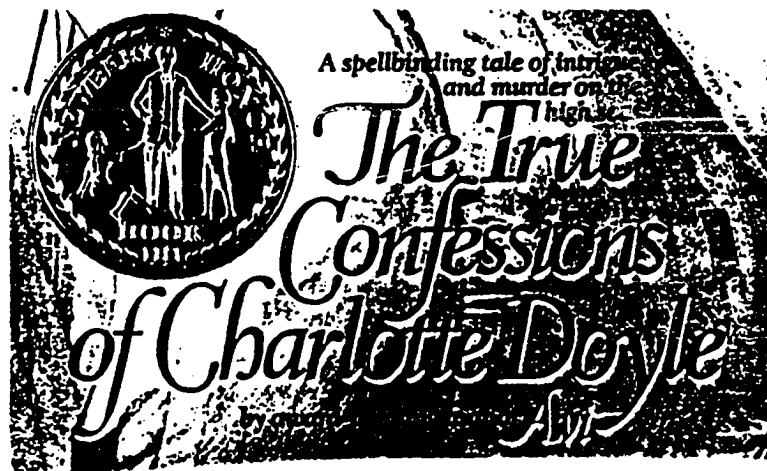
Culminating Activities

1. Create a dictionary for specialized terms.
2. Create a conflict game, with solutions, using the conflicts in the book.
3. Keep a diary choosing a character in the book as the writer.
4. Write a series of newspaper articles (at least 3) describing incidents in the book. An imaginary interview with one of the characters in the book can be included.
5. An interview of someone outside the class who lived during the years the book takes place. Some topics to be covered: life in the South, the role of men and women, racism. This interview will be presented to the class.
6. Research the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's. What changes have come about in the South as a result? What things have not changed. What scenarios would be different in the book if it happened today?
7. Role of the women in the book. The black women compared to the few white women.



Culminating Activities

1. Present a monologue--Imagine yourself living during World War II--what would you think, feel, do?
2. Interview someone who lived during World War II and present to class.
3. Create an underground newspaper (2-4 pages). Base it in an historical time or your school.
4. Create a timeline of the story and map the routes.
5. Research your family (if applicable)--write down stories from World War II and bring in pictures to share.
6. Read two additional books on the period and report on them to the class.



Culminating Activities

1. Charlotte as a "lady" versus as a "sailor"--role of girls in 1832. Research.
2. Timeline of journey
3. Research life on a ship in the mid-1800's.
4. Charlotte's essay on proper behavior for young women before and after her journey.
5. write a series (at least 5) of letters home at different times during her journey
6. Illustrate major happenings in the book in sequence; with several sentences under each picture (at least 5)